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No. 63.

THE TWO SLUMBERS.

BY EREN E. HEPFORD.

One day my baby nestled
Close down against my breast,
And whispered, "I am tired,
And now I want to rest."
And I held her on my bosom,
And sang a ditty old,
About the Sunset City
Whose streets are paved with gold.
Soon her baby hands dropped gently
Across her peaceful breast,
And the spell of sleep fell o'er her
And wrapped her in its rest.
Again my darling nestled
Within my loving arms,
And my heart would vain enfold her
From all of earth's alarms.
"I'm tired," she whispered. "Sing me
That dear old song again."
And I sang it over gently,
To charm away her pain.
Her eyelids fell together
And hid away the light,
But I knew the dawn of Heaven
Was breaking on her sight.
Her weary hands were folded
Upon a wearier breast,
And I felt that my poor, tired darling
Had found an endless rest.

In the Web

THE GIRL-WIFE'S TRIALS.

A HEART AND LIFE ROMANCE OF THE CRESCENT CITY.

BY EDWIN SOUTH.

CHAPTER VII.

THE COUNTERPLOT.

We will now follow the dark figure which we have seen escape from Jackson Square. As it passes in front of the gas lamp there we catch a glimpse of a shriveled face, that might have been alabaster in its youth, but certainly more resembles parchment now; it was the face of a woman of sixty—a crafty, cunning face, but not unkind or repulsive, by any means.

Despite her years she walked rapidly and soon reached a tall, fine-looking dwelling on Dauphin street. Without stopping to rap, she pushed open the door and ascended to the second floor. Here she tapped softly at a door, from under which a strong ray of light crept into the darkness of the corridor.

The door was instantly unlocked from the inside and Mangy stood on the threshold.

"Come in, Martha, good soul, come in!" were her first words, as soon as she recognized her visitor.

"Is that Martha?" cried a voice from the inside, which clearly was that of Bradley Turner.

"Yes, my child; it's old Martha," replied the old woman, hobbling into the room.

She looked around at the comfortable crimson carpet; at the soft, luxurious chairs and sofa; at the heavily-framed pictures on the wall, and then over at Bradley, where he sat shuffling a pack of cards at a table.

"Hum, hum, but you're comfortable here, Miss Mangy. Nicer is it sitting here than tramping over this big city in the fog and night air," she remarked, as she dropped into a chair and threw off her big hood.

"Yes," replied Mangy, coming forward, and laying her hand on Martha's shoulder, "we are very comfortable, and I know you are very tired."

"Yes, indeed! and that I am; and all for nothing, or next to nothing."

"You don't mean to say that you've been galivanting on the scent all night, and have found nothing at the end of the trail—does you?" asked Turner, dropping the cards and looking into Martha's face.

"Well, did you ever?" exclaimed the old woman. "There's my thanks for helping you two to do a noble action. Well, did you ever?"

"Now, just listen to that provoking old woman. Whose noble action is it, I'd like to know? Is it mine? I guess not!" and having said this, in an injured tone, and with a show of indignation, Turner threw himself back on his chair and fell to a contemplation of the ceiling.

"There, there now; don't quarrel over who is responsible for a good Christian act," said Mangy, soothingly. "I'm sure you both have reason to be proud of the aid you have given me in my weak endeavor to save a poor, wronged wife from despair, and perhaps death."

"But he is so snappish!" put in Martha. "Bless me if I can live in the same house with him, hardly."

"Never mind Brad," replied Mangy. "What have you discovered?"

"Well," and as the old woman began, she folded her hands in her lap in a self-satisfied way, "I've found out that Silas Norman is plaguing afraid of you two betraying him. He said as much to the young man when he met him in the Square."

"Well," said Mangy, eagerly. "What then?"

"He told him he had a man on Spain street to do what he had first cut out for Turner, here, to do."

"Did you hear the name of the individual?" asked Turner.

"Yes, but not very plain. You see, I had that big block of stone, on which Jackson's horse stands, between me and them, and I had some trouble in catching their words."

"What was the name?" asked Mangy. "Well, it sounded—mind, I don't say it is the name, but I say it sounded like Pedro Melto."

"Bully!" broke in Turner. "Now, matters are getting interesting. Do you know, Mangy, that this thing of doing a disinterested Christian act is pleasant now and



Tillie fell forward upon the new grave, and wept as she had never wept before.

then, by way of variety? It wouldn't do to follow as a regular business, you know?"

"And why not?" asked Mangy, her eyes sparkling as she witnessed the enthusiasm of her friend.

"Why not?" ejaculated Turner. "Would you have us starve to death?"

"No, not a bit of it, and I'm almost ashamed to hear you say so, Brad Turner. There is such a thing as working for an honest living, is there not?"

"Working for a living?" repeated Brad, as if stunned by the thought. "You wouldn't, now come, Mangy, you wouldn't have a fellow to come down to plain, hard work like a nigger. You can't mean that?"

"Yes, I do, and nothing else, although I can't see that work would make a nigger of you. Work is not ignoble if the laborer is not degraded already."

Bradley Turner gazed at the speaker in open-mouthed wonder, and when she had finished he said, rather thoughtfully:

"Mangy Norman, you're just as far above me and that rascally old humping Norman, as the sun is above the earth, and you're just about that much brighter and better than either of us."

"No, no Brad; you are mistaken. I have known of the perpetration of robberies and have kept my silence, thereby making myself as guilty as those who actually did the stealing. My father—"

"Your bogus father, you mean," interrupted Brad.

"Well, it don't matter. He's the only father I ever knew, and while I know that he is not my real parent, still he has been kind to me often, and, as I was about to remark, I would like better than all things else to save him from this terrible life he is leading."

"Can't never do it," put in Martha, who had been an attentive listener. "Silas Norman is bad from the bone out, and it's no use for any person talking or trying to tell me anything else."

"Guess no person will worry themselves trying to convince you," said Turner, with sly sarcasm.

Martha was warming up for a fresh onslaught, but Mangy, seeing this, turned the conversation adroitly, by saying:

"What do you propose to do now, Brad, about this Blanchard affair?"

"Do? Why, I'll find out Mister Pedro Melto of Spain street, to-morrow night, and then I'll dog him to the home of Mark Blanchard's cast-off toy, and then prepare Mrs. Mark for a grand tableau, minus the red fire."

The plan appeared very good and easy of execution, and Mangy said:

"If you do this, Brad, I'll not forget you, be sure of that."

"I'll do it, Miss Norman," replied Brad; "and now, as the actors say in the play—fare thee well until to-morrow. Good-night, Mammy Martha; good-night."

He shook hands with both, and a moment after he was up in his own chamber near the roof, and Martha and Mangy were still discussing the events of the night.

CHAPTER VIII.

HO! FOR MEXICO!

The evening sun was bathing the beautiful Southern landscape in a golden glory; the sinuous Mississippi rolled silently between its artificial banks toward the Gulf, its waters catching faintly the radiance from the sky.

Tillie Blanchard sat at the west window of Sam Pettis' humble cabin, and watched the sun change from gold to crimson, and finally, like a great round world on fire, drop into the distant lake and disappear.

That sun was like her life, which she felt was going down into gloom and darkness, perhaps never to rise again.

Since her husband's departure she had had time to think. But her thoughts were not ministering angels; they were hideous realities, whispering into her unwilling ear the story of her woe and degradation. The wife of a man who had been too proud or timid to openly acknowledge the relationship; the companion of a criminal, who, even now, was a fugitive from justice; the future was indeed dark and gloomy. Had she not loved Mark Blanchard tenderly, truly, with all the devotion of an ardent woman's nature, she would not so easily have forgiven the crime for which he had to flee. But her love, even with this stain upon her idol, was idolatry still.

It was that love which had silenced her remonstrance against a secret marriage; it was that love which had given her courage to leave her poor old father and mother without a word of warning—without a farewell even—to meet the world, side by side with him she loved.

She thought now, as she sadly gazed at the sunset, of her old deserted home in Tennessee; of her kind, good father; of her fair and fond mother. Would they miss her long? Did they still think of her? Did they believe her pure and good, or base and wicked? She would so like to write them a long letter, assuring them that she was Mark Blanchard's wife; that she would soon go back and see them again; and that Mark and she loved each other very much indeed. But no, she could not, dared not, write now. They could not forgive Mark as easily as

she had done. Abel Maynard would hang his head in disgrace were he to know that his daughter—his pet, his own Tillie—was the wife of a forger.

Ah! these thoughts, this knowledge, were very bitter to that poor, half-crazed creature, and not knowing well what else to do, she laid her head upon the window-sill and wept hot tears, like a vexed child.

A tap at the door aroused her, and turning, she beheld Sam Pettis—big, burly, rough Sam Pettis—standing in the doorway, biting his nether lip, and looking very much puzzled.

"Well, Sam, what is it?" she asked, wiping her eyes.

"The truth is, Mistress Tillie," he began, "I didn't mean to find you crying—I didn't, indeed."

"Oh, it doesn't make any difference, Sam. I'm only a foolish girl, and I'm not worth minding."

"Well, as to that, Mistress Tillie, I can't agree with you. You're too good and sweet to cry much, and I don't want to be bold, or anything like that, you know, but if there is anything Sam Pettis can do for you to keep you from crying and to make you happy, you can count on him—that's all."

The rough fellow's face was aglow with the tenderest compassion as he said these words, and Tillie felt as if she could almost worship him. His kindness overcame her, however, and instead of answering him, she burst into a fresh flood of tears. Sam Pettis looked at her helplessly, and seating himself on a stool just by the door, he put up his hands to his face, and cried too.

This was the position of affairs when Sallie Pettis came in out of the cornfield, a few minutes later—her hands full of fresh-laid eggs—and looking from one to the other, she exclaimed:

"What on 'arth is the matter with you two?"

"Oh, Sallie! I felt so lonesome, and I was crying, and Sam there—poor Sam—he pitied me," said Tillie, looking up through her tears.

"Well, I do say!" exclaimed Sallie; "that's the first time as I ever see'd Sam Pettis cry in his natural life."

And saying this, Sallie sat down, and began to sob too.

"Is this where Samuel Pettis lives?"

The voice was low and insinuating, tinged with a slight foreign accent, and on the weeping trio looking suddenly up, they saw the form of Pedro Melto in the open doorway.

"Yes, sir, I live here," replied Sam, rising, and a trifle embarrassed.

"Does Mrs. Blanchard live here, too?" asked Pedro.

"Yes," answered Tillie, before any other person could speak.

"I have a letter from your husband to you," he held out a delicate white missive, and, with a feverish eagerness, Tillie ran forward and clutched it.

Kissing it passionately, she broke the seal and read it half aloud.

It was very brief, and ran thus:

"Galveston, Oct. —, 18—

"DEAR WIFE: The bearer of this is my best friend, Pedro Marchin. You can trust him fully to conduct you to Vera Cruz, where I hope to meet you soon. Lose no time, but start at once. M. B."

"Yes, I will go at once," she said, as she finished reading. "I would go to the end of the world for his sake. When do we start?" This to Pedro.

"If madame is ready," replied the Spaniard, deferentially, "we will go now."

"Now! Why, she can't go now. She is not ready," exclaimed Sallie. "Why, I do say, the very idea of a person running off in this way!"

Tillie smiled. "I'm quite ready, Sallie. My wardrobe is not so extensive. And you, sir," she said, addressing herself to Pedro; "you promise to take good care of me until we see Mark?"

"I do, madame," was the reply.

There was a half an hour spent in filling a valise with a few articles of Tillie's wearing apparel, and in bidding poor, simple-hearted Sam, and kind, patient Sallie, goodbye, and then the two travelers were off on their long journey.

They took the train to Brashear City; thence by steamer to Galveston, and there they were compelled to wait for three days for the sailing of a brig bound for Mazatlan.

The weather was very beautiful—the days warm and pleasant, the nights moonlit.

Notwithstanding the delights incident to a sea voyage at such a season, Tillie thought the days very long, and the nights inexpressibly dreary.

For the first two days after leaving port she kept her state-room religiously; but, a little after sunset, on the third day, at the solicitation of Pedro and the captain of the vessel, she ventured on deck.

In the east the moon was soaring, lifting itself up out of the waters, which, like a liquid wilderness, stretched everywhere, just ruffled into ripples by a slight breeze, that filled the bellied sails and drove the little craft southward.

"It's a party night, missus," said Captain Black, leaning over the taffrail and addressing Tillie.

"Yes, sir; a very beautiful night," was the reply.

"Do you like moonlight nights on sea?" asked the old sailor.

"This is the first time I ever saw the sea by night, and I think I never saw any thing half so lovely."

"And you never saw it at night before, eh? Well, well, but that sounds queer, marm—mighty queer, I can tell you—specially to an old sea-dog like me, as was rocked in the cradle of the deep, as the song says."

There was a pause for a minute or two, and then the captain added: "Born inland—eh?"

"Yes."

"Far from the ocean?"

"On the Cumberland river."

"In Kentucky?"

"No, in Tennessee, close to Clarksville."

"So, so! Way up there? Seems to me it would be hard to get one's breath, away up there among the hills."

She laughed at this odd idea, and Pedro, who had been silently watching the sea all the time, laughed as well.

After that night, the captain took quite a fancy to Tillie's society, and many a tedious hour she escaped in listening to the yarns Captain Black was very fond of spinning.

At last, Mazatlan was reached, and here another vessel was found, which, in due season, carried our travelers to the stone-girt harbor of Vera Cruz.

CHAPTER IX.

"LORD HAVE MERCY ON US!"

As the vessel touched the quay, Tillie strained her eyes shoreward to see if she could not somehow detect the form of her husband on the crowded landing. But, no; he was not there, and the people all about her were talking in a fierce, foreign tongue, that made her feel—oh, so keenly—how much of a stranger she was.

"Where is Mark?" she asked, turning to Pedro, as they left the vessel.

"At the 'Hotel La Plata,' madame," was the reply. "That is where he told me to meet him."

They picked their way carefully among the barrels and bales that lined the shore, and soon they found themselves in an open square.

"That is the 'Hotel La Plata' over there," said the Spaniard, pointing to a large stone house, with a colonnade in front, and all its windows protected from the sun by small, scalloped awnings.

Tillie followed the direction pointed out, and was pleased to find that the hotel exteriorly gave indications of refinement.

A walk of a few minutes and the hotel was reached. Pedro conducted Tillie into the parlor, and went in quest of the clerk.

He came back presently, and introduced to her the proprietor of the house.

"Madame wishes a good room, with every accommodation," said Pedro.

"We will try to please the senorita," answered the Bonifaz, bowing profoundly.

Then the two men exchanged a few words in Spanish, and, with another bow, the landlord withdrew.

"Where is Mark?" questioned Tillie, as soon as she and Pedro were alone again.

"Why don't he come?"

"He is out of town, madame," was the response, "and will not reach the city until midnight."

Tillie looked, searchingly, up into the man's face, and his eyes fell and his face colored crimson.

"You are deceiving me, Pedro," she said, decidedly. "I know you are deceiving me."

"I am not, madame."

"You said but now Mark was here, at the hotel; now you claim he is out of town. Tell me, now, Pedro, the truth."

The Spaniard dropped his eyes and remained silent. This frightened Tillie. She thought she discovered a disposition to withhold from her the real whereabouts of her husband, and she was all a-tremble when she said:

"Oh, Pedro, for Heaven's sake, if not for mine, do not—do not keep me in this terrible suspense. Tell me—tell me where is my husband?"

The Spaniard looked into the beautiful face opposite, so full of agony and entreaty, and while a shade of counterfeited sadness passed over his face, he answered:

"If Madame Blanchard could only bear a little trouble—"

Tillie was upon her feet in an instant. Her eyes were fixed, with a stary, despairing gaze, upon Pedro's dusky face; her hands worked nervously, and her form quivered with excitement.

"What do you mean, Pedro?"

The Spaniard hung his head and was silent still.

"Pedro Mento, do you wish to stand there dumb until I go raving mad? Speak out! Where is Mark Blanchard, my husband?"

"Will Madame be patient while I speak?"

"As Job; go on!"

"Then, Senor Blanchard is very ill."

"Sick, Pedro? Do you mean to say that he is sick?"

"Very sick."

"Where?"

"At San Madeline."

"Where is San Madeline?"

"Two miles off."

"Then let us go to him at once," exclaimed Tillie. "I must see him. My eyes are aching for the sight."

"Not now, madame. We can not go now."

"And why not?"

"You are tired and need rest. We will go to-morrow."

She shook off the hand that he laid upon her arm. "No, I am not tired; and, were my feet blistered and bleeding, I would manage to crawl upon my hands and knees to see my husband. Oh, Pedro, you can not understand the depth of my love for Mark. I hardly can realize it myself."

This strong, unselfish love was a new revelation to Pedro Mento, and he began to feel how difficult it would be to control such a nature. He determined on putting an end to this scene at once; and so he said:

"Madame would not find him at San Madeline if she did go."

"Not at San Madeline?"

"No."

"And why not?"

"Because Senor Blanchard is not there."

Tillie's face assumed an ashen hue, and she felt a heavy weight, as of lead, crushing her heart.

Between her teeth she managed to ask:

"What do you mean?"

"You will take comfort, my dear madame, but I have very bad news for you. The landlord has just told me Senor Blanchard fought a duel on Tuesday last."

"Well, well! Go on!" exclaimed Tillie, clutching at Pedro's arm. "Did he kill the man?"

"No, madame. Poor Senor Mark was killed!"

The young wife let go her hold of the man's arm, and, with a moan, sunk helpless to the floor.

At first, Pedro thought she was dead, so limp and colorless was she; but, when he picked her up and placed her upon a sofa near an open window, the glow came faintly back into her cheeks, and presently she opened her eyes and stared about her.

Then the terrible reality of her position came flashing across her mind, corroding it with its fearful fire, and causing her to cry out:

"Oh! my God! I'm going mad—mad—mad!"

Her beautiful brown hair fell in a shower about her shoulders; her eyes blazed as if they would burn their lashes, and Pedro, for the nonce, thought she was really crazed.

He sat opposite to her, on the sofa, his own eyes filled with tears, for the wretch was a capital actor, and in vain did he try to comfort her.

She looked at him sternly, and was about to utter a stinging rebuke, but, noticing his tears, she fell to weeping herself, crying out at intervals:

"Oh, God, have pity, have pity!"

When the first outburst had subsided she talked to Pedro calmly of her situation; at least as calmly as a frantic woman could, and he finally prevailed upon her to go to her chamber and take a few hours of rest.

"In the morning," he said, "we will go out to the cemetery of San Madeline, and see his grave."

She wanted to go then, but the Spaniard said it was too late to think of such a thing, and that in the morning she would be better and more able to walk.

Yes, she agreed with him; she was not able to walk now, and in the morning they would go.

It was a night full of pain and heartache to poor Tillie. Thousands of miles from home, bereaved and alone in the first hours of a great bereavement. She tried to sleep, but it was impossible. Her feelings were too bitter to be quieted with anything short of death itself.

As the cathedral bell of San Louis tolled the midnight hour, she pushed back the drapery that concealed her chamber window and looked out into the night.

The moon was shining brightly, gilding the spires and domes of the old Aztec city with floods of liquid gold. The soft, doleful music of a church choir, pealing forth a requiem for a departed soul, came upon the wing of the night wind, to her ear, and the hymn of midnight from a Benedictine Monastery welled up from the sleeping squares below, until her whole being was thrilled with the mystery of the music.

"Kyrie Eleison" was the burden of the refrain, and falling upon her knees by the open window, she echoed it in plainest English: "Lord have mercy upon us!"

When the morning came at last it found her asleep, just where she had knelt. Dressing herself, she went down to the drawing-room and encountered Pedro.

He spoke to her kindly, and gave her a purse of five hundred Mexican dollars, which, he said, Mark had left in the landlord's care for her.

Then they canvassed the situation, and Tillie decided that she would remain in Vera Cruz, close to Mark's grave, until death would place her by his side. Pedro advised a return to New Orleans at once, but he did not urge it strongly, and soon gave in to her plan, and the matter was considered settled.

Two miles east of Vera Cruz, on a sloping hillside, overlooking the bay, lies the cemetery of San Madeline. It is an antique old Necropolis, and holds tombs bearing date two centuries back. Some of its stones are sound and upright yet, but many have been eaten into by the teeth of a thousand tempests, and some are shattered and covered with clinging vines and ivy.

About noon, on the day following her arrival in Vera Cruz, Tillie and Pedro made their way through this silent city of the dead, and finally paused before a new-made grave. There was a plain slab of brown stone at its head, and with streaming eyes and breaking heart, Tillie managed to trace out the inscription, which ran thus:

"Sacred to the Memory
OF
MARK BLANCHARD.
Requiescat in Pace."

She fell forward upon the new grave, and wept as she had never wept before.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 61.)

The Winged Whale:

OR,
THE MYSTERY OF RED RUPERT.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "SCARLET HAND," "HEART OF FIRE,"
"WOLF DEMON," ETC.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE SECRET OF NANON.

By the window of her humble apartment in the little inn sat the French girl, Nanon, gazing dreamily out upon the view before her.

Far off in the distance was the dark line of the forest, that fringed, with leafy green, the blue waters of the bay. On the forest line the eyes of the girl rested.

Nanon was now attired in the garb of her sex. A simple dress of white, which loosely flowing, only half hid the beautiful outlines of her perfect form.

The face of the girl was deadly pale. Her features told plainly of the terrible scene of the previous night that had transpired within the forest, on which her eyes now rested.

A low sigh came from her lips. A sigh that revealed the anguish that pervaded her being.

"Oh! I am so wretched!" she murmured, sadly. "Why did I not remain in New Orleans? What demon tempted me to seek here the man who does not care for the love which once he tried so hard to win?"

The sad musings of the girl were interrupted by a low tap upon the door.

"Come in," she said. She guessed who was her visitor.

The door opened and Baptiste entered. A sad smile played around the beautiful lips of the girl at his approach. She extended her hand to him. With a motion, full of love, full of tenderness, he carried the soft, white hand to his lips and imprinted a kiss upon it. A moment he looked steadily into the pale face of the girl, an earnest look upon his features. In her face he read the truth. Silently he brought a chair and sat down by her side.

"Nanon, you are not well," he said, slowly.

"You are right, Baptiste; I am not well, for I am sick—sick at heart," she replied, with a sad smile.

"Ah, Nanon, you would not pay heed to my advice last night," he said, mournfully. "I warned you of the consequences, but you were willful and would have your own way. You are but a feeble girl, not strong. It is a wonder that your life did not pay the forfeit for last night's rash adventure."

When I met you in your disguise coming from the house where this American resides, I could hardly believe my eyes, yet I recognized your face on the instant. And now I regret that I yielded to your prayers and allowed you to commit this act of madness."

"Oh, Baptiste, you are so good to me!" the girl murmured, softly, and she clasped the strong hand of the Frenchman within her own little palms, as she spoke.

"Nanon, you know that I would lay down my life to serve you!" Baptiste replied, earnestly.

"From my soul, I believe you. Would to heaven that I could requite your love," the girl said, mournfully.

"Nanon, when will you leave this place and return to Orleans?"

"I do not know—I can not tell," the girl replied, in broken accents.

"Is it the baleful influence of this man—this Spanish captain, Estevan—that draws you here?"

The girl did not reply, but silently covered her face with her hands.

"You understand; I understand; my guess is right," Baptiste said, slowly. "Oh, Nanon, this man's love is a fatal one; it will bring naught but despair and death to you. Return to Orleans, avoid his presence. In absence, learn to forget the man who, having won your love, now betrays it."

"Betrays it?" said the girl, slowly, and removing her hands from her face as she spoke, and gazing once more into the face of Baptiste.

"Yes, betrays it," repeated Baptiste, with emphasis. "Nanon, do not think that I would wrong this man even with a thought, although there is not another soul on the face of the earth that I hate more bitterly. But, even in my anger, he shall have all the justice that he deserves. He has forgotten the vows he swore to you only a few short months ago, and now seeks the hand of another woman."

"Baptiste, you are wrong," the girl said, quickly. "Estevan explained to me, that, forced by his father, he had consented to a marriage with some wealthy heiress, but he does not love her."

"He has spoken falsely, like the coward that he is," cried Baptiste, impatiently. "Do you know the nature of the quarrel between him and the American?"

"Yes, he explained it to me. The American was wronged in some way and fancied that Estevan was his wronger."

"Again he has deceived you! The quarrel was about this Spanish girl, Isabel, the one whose hand this false-hearted captain seeks. The American loves her, and she loves him. He is a dangerous rival in the path of this noble Spaniard, and so, soldier-like, he employed an assassin to waylay the American and shoot him in the forest. In some way the American escaped the snare laid for him, and called the Spaniard to an account for his treachery. This is the reason why the American challenged him."

A faint flush of color appeared on the pale cheeks of the girl; the thought of a rival was bitter to her.

"How did you discover this?" she asked, slowly, still unwilling to believe the truth that was so unwelcome.

"From a drunken soldier of the garrison that I met in a wine-house last night. The wine was in his veins and he was out of his head. He belonged to Captain Estevan's company, I guessed, and I might learn something from him that might be worth knowing; so I plied him with wine. Little by little I discovered all that I wished to know. Although the fellow was drunk when I first met him, yet he seemed to have the throat of a fish, for he drained six bottles ere he spoke. He was cunning, even in his cups. But, by shrewd questioning, I got the truth from him."

"Then Estevan seeks this girl of his own free will?" Nanon said, dreamily, a dread weight of sorrow pressing upon her young heart.

"Yes; he is mad in love with her."

"Oh, this is terrible!" cried the girl, in agony.

"Say but the word, Nanon. I'll seek him out and stab him to the heart, even though he were surrounded by all the soldiers of the garrison, and I knew that my death would come the moment after his!" cried Baptiste, fiercely.

"No, no!" exclaimed the girl, quickly. "do not attempt aught of violence toward him. If he has deceived me let Heaven punish him."

"It would be much more satisfactory to me if I could be the agent of Heaven's vengeance," grumbled Baptiste.

"It must not be. Oh, this is a terrible revelation. I have been dreaming of the day when I should stand before the altar, his wife." Again the poor girl covered her face with her hands, and the hot tears came slowly from the glorious dark eyes.

"His wife," said Baptiste, slowly. "Nanon, do you know that, even if you had no rival, your marriage with this man is impossible?"

"You think so because I am poor," Nanon replied.

"Nanon, you know the history of your life?"

"Yes; brought up in a convent school in Orleans; my parents unknown; my wants provided for by some unknown benefactor, who, at regular periods, provided money for my support. At this age of sixteen years I came and took me from the convent. That was four years ago, and since that time you have been father, brother, all to me, and yet you have often told me that you are no relative of mine, but acting only as the agent of another."

"You have never attempted to penetrate the mystery of your birth?"

"No; for when I questioned you, you replied that the time would come when you would be at liberty to reveal to me the secret of my birth. I was satisfied, and questioned you no further."

"Nanon, I am compelled to speak words that will be painful ones for you to hear. Your father is living."

"My father living!" cried the girl, in astonishment.

"Yes."

"Oh, where?"

"That I can not tell you. At present it must remain a secret."

"But one day you will take me to him?"

"Yes, perhaps."

"Perhaps? Is there a doubt?" the girl asked, anxiously.

"It all depends upon his will," Baptiste replied.

"But why is my marriage with Estevan impossible?" Nanon asked, in wonder.

"Will my father object?"

"It is Estevan himself who will object when he knows who and what you are," Baptiste said, slowly.

"I do not understand," she murmured, bewildered.

"And at present, I can not explain; but I urge you, Nanon, as you value your own peace of mind—to crush out of your heart the love that exists there for this Spanish officer."

With wondering eyes, Nanon looked upon the grave face of Baptiste. His words were so strange that she could not guess their meaning.

"When I cease to love him, I shall die," she murmured, sorrowfully. "When I crush the love from my heart, I banish all the sunlight from my life."

"Even if I convince you that he is unworthy of your love? that at the very moment he is protesting to you that you are dearer than all else in the world to him, he is moving both heaven and earth to win another woman?"

"But can you do this?" the girl asked, sadly; it was hard to convince her of her lover's falsehood.

"Yes; and if I do it?"

"I will try to forget him," she murmured, slowly.

"Good! that is all I ask. Ah! Nanon, it will be far better for you in the end."

"I hope so," she replied, a sad accent in her clear voice.

A few more words of aimless import and Baptiste withdrew from the apartment.

A dark look was on his stern face as he descended the stairs.

"By heaven! I believe she would mourn him less dead than married to another. She is an angel in disposition, and yet I have dared to hope to win her for myself. If I can destroy the love that is in her heart for this treacherous Spaniard, my dream may turn to reality. I've half a mind to lay in wait for this same Captain Estevan and try the effect of a pistol-ball upon him. But first, to prove to Nanon that he has been false to her. Then the news of his death will not afflict her as much as otherwise it would. If he meets the American in a fair fight though, his sword may save me some trouble. He'll make short work with the Spaniard or I miss my guess."

Baptiste descended into the street, and just by the door of the inn he met Roque Vasca. The soldier was half-drunk, as usual.

"Hallo, comrade!" cried Roque, in delight; "how do you feel after last night's bout?"

Roque was the soldier from whom Baptiste had procured his information relative to the Spanish captain.

"Excellent," Baptiste replied; "where are you going?"

"To the wine-shop; come with me and have a bottle."

Baptiste, nothing loth, linked arms with Roque and the two walked on.

"By the way, what are you?" asked Roque, suddenly.

"Nothing!" replied Baptiste, laconically.

"Good; would you like to earn a few gold pieces?"

"That depends upon the way in which they are to be gained," Baptiste said.

"You handle a sword?"

"Yes."

"Do you like to hunt?"

"To hunt?"

"Yes; a panther, you know."

Baptiste guessed the hidden meaning.

"When is the hunt to take place?" he asked.

"Right, some time."

"Where?"

"In the city somewhere. It is a terrible panther we're going after. We hunt him with swords, for firearms make a noise," and Roque put his tongue in his cheek in a very significant manner.

CHAPTER XX.

THE ASSASSIN'S WATCH.

The shades of night once more wrapped the bay and town of Pensacola in a mantle of gloom. The moon once more rose in the heavens and shed its soft light over earth and sea. But, the sweet mistress of the night was hid from view every now and then by dark clouds that swept enviously over the blue vault and veiled the silver light beneath a dark shroud.

Rupert and Andrews stood before the door of the merchant's mansion, whose hospitality they enjoyed.

Rupert cast an anxious glance up at the clouded sky. A far off on the broad surface of the bay the night wind was stirring the billows and decking them with caps of white. To the mind of the sailor, earth, sea and air all foretold the coming of a storm.

Andrews noticed the anxious gaze of Rupert. His keen eyes too read the storm-signs truly.

"It's going to be a stormy night, cap'n," Andrews said, reflectively.

"Yes, it looks like it," Rupert replied, with another glance at the billows tossing afar off in the bay. "I am sorry for it; too, yet still, I do not know as it matters much. If my guess is right, it will be midnight ere the storm strikes us."

"There or thereabouts," remarked Andrews, with a searching look, first at the sky and then at the white-capped waves.

"But what difference does it make to you anyway, cap'n?"

"I intend to take a walk to-night, and I should prefer that the storm should not interfere with my intention or spoil the pleasure of my stroll," replied Rupert, a quiet smile upon his face.

"Isn't this glorious fun, comrade?" questioned the soldier, with a chuckle. "Do you know that there is no sport in the world like a man-hunt?"

"Yes; but this happens to be a woman-hunt," replied Baptiste, dryly.

"She'll lead us to the man, fast enough." "And what are we going to do when we find him?" asked the Frenchman, although he had a pretty clear idea of the nature of the events that were to come.

"Give him a rapier-thrust or two, and tumble his body into the bay," replied the soldier, grimly.

"Suppose he resists?" "Are we not five to one, not counting the captain?" demanded Roque, in contempt. "He could not escape our swords were he the devil himself, instead of a heretic of an American."

All the while that this conversation was progressing they were still stealing along in the footsteps of the girl, keeping well in the shadows of the houses, and adopting every precaution that ingenuity could suggest to prevent the girl from discovering that she was followed.

All at once Roque stopped. "It is useless for you to go any further. You may as well return at once and lead the captain and the rest here. Do you see the last house yonder?" and Roque pointed northward.

"Yes." "Tell the captain to halt there and wait my coming. I will follow the girl until she meets her lover, and then return and conduct the captain."

"But are you sure that you know the road that the girl will take?" She may have led us on a false scent."

"Oh, no!" Roque cried, quickly: "If she had been going to the forest, she would have turned to the left long ago. She will walk on the beach. Remember, the captain is to wait yonder." Then the soldier again stole onward, while Baptiste retraced his steps.

In his bosom his hand sought a loaded pistol.

"The Spaniard seeks to assassinate the American in the darkness. It would be a terrible accident if, in the confusion, one of the shots should strike him," Baptiste muttered. There was a world of meaning in the little sentence.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE SCUD FOR BLOOD.

The dark clouds were chasing each other rapidly over the face of the sky. So dense were the clouds, and so quickly did they follow each other, that it was only now and then the clear rays of the moon lighted up the earth.

Just beyond the edge of the town, by the beach on which the dark waters of the sea were ceaselessly leaping with a sullen roar, stood Rupert and the maid he loved so well—the fair Spanish girl, Isabel.

Tightly she clung to the manly bosom of her lover, and gazed with eyes full of passionate tenderness into the swarthy face of the man who had won her young heart's love.

No dread of danger was in the minds of the lovers. They thought only of the happiness of the moment.

Locked in each other's arms, they renewed the vows that they had so often exchanged. The clouds scudded across the sky; the sea roared, and tossed its white-capped billows in upon the sandy beach; the wind whistled around them with a mournful cry.

They noted neither the sky nor earth, the wind nor sea. Rupert saw only the azure eyes of Isabel, felt only the warm pressure of her lips and the quick throbbings of her heart, beating wildly in response to his own. And Isabel, on her part, thought only of the man whose arms encircled her.

A footstep grating upon the sandy strand, and a dark figure coming rapidly toward them, startled the two from their passion-trance of love. With one hand Rupert pressed the girl to his side, while with the other he drew his pistol from the concealment of his breast. He leveled the weapon full at the dark figure that was approaching with such haste, but a warning cry, given cautiously in Andrews' well-known voice, caused him to drop his hand.

"Do not fear, Isabel," Rupert said, quickly: "it is a friend—Decius Andrews, my first officer."

"Look out, cap'n!" cried Andrews, cautiously, as he came up to Rupert: "there's a scoundrel coming. We'll have to make sail, for we'll need sea-room."

"What is the matter?" "Some skulking chaps have followed you. I had an idea that there might be trouble, so I just sneaked after you, cap'n, and after you met Miss here—and the Yankee made an awkward bow to Isabel—I snuggled myself down in a dark hole under a bush by the little house yonder. Putty soon a fellow came along a-tracking Miss, and arter a bit five more joined him. They held a confab right side of where I was hid. They just put me in a cold sweat for fear they would find me out, and I'd have to kill three or four of them. Well, they decided to jest separate their forces, surround you on all sides, and then make a dash at you."

"This danger, indeed?" Rupert said, calmly, but with a troubled glance into the beautiful face of the girl who clung so confidently to his breast.

"Well, I guess it is! There's six of them altogether, and they mean mischief. I wait till they separated on their surrounding business, and then I got out of the hole and made tracks for you."

"What do you advise, Andrews?" asked Rupert. He had great faith in the ready wit of the shrewd Yankee.

"Run!" replied Andrews, laconically. "Run!" Rupert did not like the idea. Few times in his life had he turned his back on a foe.

"Yes; there are too many of them to fight. Besides, think of the danger of Miss here,"—and again the Yankee bowed gallantly to Isabel—"getting hurt in the 'ruction," as a Paddy-wacker would say."

"You are right!" cried Rupert, fully convinced by the reference to Isabel's danger. "But how can we escape? Did you not say that we were surrounded by these villains?"

"Well, I rather calculate we are by this time," replied Andrews, coolly. "How escape, then?"

"By our natural element—the water. They can't come any surround on old salt there," and a tone of affection was in the voice of Andrews, and a sparkle of pride in his keen eyes, as he pointed to the tossing billows. A sailor reared, he had all a sailor's pride in the great salt sea.

"Escape by means of the sea!" said Rupert, in astonishment; "but the means?"

"If my eyes don't deceive me, there's a fisherman's boat yonder, oars and all," and Andrews pointed to the beach.

The Yankee was right. Rupert had been too much absorbed in the blue eyes and sweet face of Isabel to notice aught else. "We shall escape them almost by a miracle!" cried Rupert, leading Isabel to the beach, upon which, out of the reach of the tide, the boat lay.

I guess they'll be some pretty tall swimmers when the Dons make their rush and find us safe upon the sea," said Andrews, with a dry chuckle.

The two men slid the light boat into the water, which received it with a close embrace as if glad to welcome the craft back to its native element.

"You see the darkness covers our movement from the sight of the cowardly curs!" exclaimed Andrews, as he assisted Isabel into the boat. "I s'pose about this time they're creeping in upon us like a lot of snakes. If the moon will only keep under the clouds for fifteen or twenty minutes longer, the 'tarnel skunks' will never be able to guess what's become of us."

Rupert entered the boat, and then with a vigorous push, Andrews committed the craft to the tide, leaping nimbly on board as he did so. The light boat danced merrily on the heaving surface of the waters.

"You'll have a nice sail homeward, Miss," said Andrews, to the girl, whose smiling face showed no thought of fear. Then the Yankee placed the little mast in its socket and gave the sail to the wind. The breeze, blowing straight from the shore, filled the canvas and the boat feeling it, began to move swiftly through the water.

The wavelets curled in little ripples from the bow, and sung a low, merry song as they broke into gurgling bubbles and floated past the little boat.

Then the moon broke through the clouds and flooded earth and sea with its silver light, making all things as clear as by the daylight.

On the shore a group of men were standing in the very spot, where, but a moment before, the lovers had stood!

A cry of rage came from the group when the bright rays of the moon revealed to them the manner in which their prey had escaped them. A shower of curses came across the surface of the water.

Andrews laughed in derision, as the boat obeyed his firm hand grasping the tiller, and sped rapidly seaward before the wind.

The mocking laugh of the Yankee filled the heart of the Spanish captain—for it was Estevan in person who led the assassin band.

"With me!" "A thousand curses!" he cried, in anger: "the dog will escape me, I'd give a hundred pieces to see that cursed American sink from the boat into the sea!"

"I'll put a ball through his head, captain!" cried Roque, drawing a heavy pistol from his belt and leveling it across his arm at the figure of Andrews seated in the stern of the boat.

"Do not fire!" cried Estevan, grasping the arm of the soldier. "The distance is too great for an accurate aim; you might miss the American and hit the girl. I would not have her die for all the gold in this New World."

"The devil himself aids these heretics!" cried Roque, philosophically, as he replaced the pistol in his belt.

"I did not think that the American could escape from me this time!" muttered Estevan, in rage.

"Bah! if there hadn't happened to be a boat here, the devil, his patron, would have taken him up in the air!" cried Roque, who had a strong belief in the marvelous.

"Why not follow them?" asked Baptiste, who until now had remained quietly in the background.

"Follow them?" exclaimed Estevan, in astonishment, and he looked with curiosity upon the stranger, whom he had not noticed before.

"A friend of mine, senior captain!" cried Roque, who noticed the look and guessed that his captain was wondering who the stranger was. "A heart of oak—true as steel!" the soldier further added, in commendation.

"Yes, senior, yonder is another boat—a sail in her too. They are driving before the wind which is blowing from the land. If we follow them, they must either return and meet us or else be driven out to sea. Once beyond the bay, yon egg-shell would not live ten minutes in such a sea as is now running."

The Spaniard saw at once how great would be his advantage on the sea.

"But, none of my men are sailors!" Estevan cried, the objection suddenly occurring to him. "No one of us can handle a boat."

"I can, senior!" cried the Frenchman, quickly, the passion for blood rising in his veins. All men have more or less of the savage spirit of the bloodhound in their nature. As Roque Vasca had said, no game like a human one!

"Yes, I have followed the sea since childhood," Baptiste replied.

"Let us pursue them then at once!" Estevan cried.

With eager haste they ran to the boat, and dragging it from the beach gave it to the embrace of the sea.

"I told you, a heart of gold!" Roque said, in glee to the man next him, as they tugged at the boat. He was referring to the stranger whom he claimed as his friend.

"The assassin band entered the boat. Strong arms pressed her from the grasp of the sand. The sail was fixed in its place, and like a grayhound freed from its leash, the light craft cut through the waters in chase of its prey.

"Alas! we'll have him yet," the captain cried, as he listened to the ripple of the water under the keel.

"Yes, unless the moon goes under a cloud again."

"What has that to do with it?" cried Roque.

"Why, in the darkness he could track, beat back to land, and so escape us," Baptiste explained.

"At present they are holding a straight course seaward," said Estevan, his eyes fixed intently upon the boat that contained the fugitives.

"Tis his only course with the wind blowing off the shore. Should they attempt to tack, we could easily run them down," Baptiste said, his hand on the helm, guiding the course of the craft.

The fugitives had watched the launch of the pursuing boat with interest.

"They've got a sailor on board," muttered Andrews, as he looked upon the craft, that, like a bloodhound, followed in their track.

"No greeny could handle a craft like that skipper. He hasn't lost an inch of water. We'll have to keep on seaward or else he'll be aboard of us."

"Why not make for the cove?" questioned Rupert. "I do not think that yonder boat is any better sailer than our own. If we can hold them at this distance in our rear, once within the cove, we can bid defiance to them."

"That's sound sense, cap'n. Once in the cove we're safe, and if the Spaniards dare to follow us, the demon of the water, the Winged Whale, will make mince-meat of 'em."

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 57.)

Phil's Intercession.

BY JENNIE LEIGH.

"Why, Floyd, my dear fellow, what is the matter? You look as if life had lost its charm, and you were the most miserable man alive."

Floyd Van Arden threw down the cigar he had been smoking so vigorously, and lifted his dark, melancholy eyes to his elder brother's face.

"Jesting aside, Phil, I believe you are about right, and that I am the most miserable of men. I have proposed to Rose Thorne, and she has rejected me!"

"That little coquette rejected you? It is impossible, Floyd, that she is in earnest. She is only trifling to prove your devotion. You are young, handsome, wealthy, everything in fact that a fashionable belle can desire in a husband, and of course you can win her for yourself if you really care."

Floyd doubted not in his own mind that he possessed all the advantages ascribed to him, yet for once he failed to share his brother's confidence in his ultimate success.

"No, Phil, you don't know her as I do. She is an angel in beauty and loveliness, and I shall never cease to adore her, even though I know my love is hopeless."

"I know my love is hopeless. I'll speak to her myself the first chance I get, and ask her to reconsider her answer. I have not the least doubt in the world it will all come out right in the end."

With a parting injunction to his brother not to be discouraged, Phil left him and started for his evening stroll on the beach. He had been absent from Newport during the past fortnight. Phil was nearly eight years the senior of his half-brother, and possessed neither the beauty nor the vast wealth which the latter had inherited from a Southern mother.

But Phil had scarcely started on his walk when he saw what caused him to quickly retrace his steps. A shower of flossy golden curls, a thin shawl, half falling from the graceful shoulders, left him in no doubt as to who occupied the end of the long hotel piazza. It was Rose Thorne, and for a wonder she was alone. The "chance" had come sooner than he expected, and Phil saw no reason why he should not avail himself of it.

"Miss Thorne."

A pair of violet eyes looked up quickly into his, and then two little hands were extended in welcome. Phil took them both in his for a moment, but refused the seat she motioned to him to take beside her.

"No; I will only detain you for a few moments, and it is to ask a favor of you that I am come."

"A favor? Nothing very difficult to grant, I trust," she said, smiling.

"No; at least I hope not. Miss Thorne, my brother has told me of the offer he has recently made you, and of your rejection of his suit."

"Well?" and a grave look came over the little face.

"And the favor I am about to ask, is that you will consider your answer more seriously before you make it a final one. You are young and thoughtless—may perhaps have been actuated by coquetry. Floyd is very much devoted to you, and I can see no possible objection to your being his wife, for in two months he comes into possession of his entire property, and—"

Phil paused abruptly, for he read in his companion's wide, unsmiling eyes, and scornfully curved lips, what forbade him to go on.

"You do well to stop there, Mr. Van Arden. Did it never occur to you that there might be a possible objection to my becoming your brother's wife, in the fact that I did not love him? You say I am young and thoughtless. May I ask how old you think I am?"

Phil's ideas of a lady's age were rather vague.

"Why I really don't know," he stammered; "fifteen—sixteen, perhaps."

Rose smiled a little in spite of herself. "I am twenty-three years old," she said; "old enough to know what sorrow and disappointment mean. You think that because you see me at a fashionable watering-place, because I laugh and dance, and make pretty toilets, that I must necessarily be heartless, soulless, and brainless; that I can have no higher ambition in life than to secure an eligible *parti*, like your brother, for instance."

Phil had nothing to say, and Miss Thorne continued.

"You have been content to find the 'Girl of the Period' only the compound of folly, absurdity and extravagance she has been represented, and as such you have judged and condemned me. But believe me, if it is a matter of the qualities of heart and soul that can win my love, his gold can never buy it!"

She had risen from her seat as she spoke, and stood before him, the violet eyes shining dark as night, and a scarlet blush burning on either cheek.

"I have been a stupid blunderer," Phil said at length, and he spoke humbly as one who addresses a superior, and I hope you will pardon me. But I misunderstood you entirely."

"I think you did," she answered, more gently; "and now, good-night."

Phil went directly to his brother's room. Floyd still sat where he had left him, his cigar out, his arms crossed upon the table and his bowed head resting upon them.

"My dear boy, I need not tell you how deeply I feel for you, but I have seen her, and I fear there is no hope. She is an angel, and you were right when you said you knew her better than I did."

So the summer sped on, and Rose Thorne appeared everywhere the acknowledged belle and beauty, always exquisitely dressed, always smiling, piquant and bewitching.

At first, Phil tried to induce his brother to leave Newport, thinking absence might help him to forget the unfortunate attachment.

But Floyd obstinately refused to go, and Phil gradually ceased to urge it, and made no further attempts to leave what was fast becoming the one spot of interest on earth to him.

One evening toward the close of the season, Phil was returning from a long, cold walk on the beach, when he came suddenly on his brother.

"Hello! old fellow!" exclaimed the latter, "you're just the one I've been looking for. Phil, I want your congratulations, for on Christmas next I am to be made the happiest of men!"

Phil's face was a trifle paler, as he laid his hand heavily on his brother's shoulder.

"Floyd, what do you mean? Is it possible that Rose—"

"Rose! Why, who's saying anything about Rose? No, indeed! It is little Stella Grey who is to be the happy woman!"

"And do you mean that you have already forgotten Rose—that you love some other woman?"

Floyd laughed his easy, good-natured laugh.

"Why, yes, *mon frere*; that is exactly what I do mean. You can't expect a thing of that kind to last forever! Rose is a nice girl in her way, rather too sentimental and high strung to suit me. Why, she can't compare with my little beauty with the great black eyes, and—"

But Phil turned abruptly away, and left his brother to finish his rhapsody alone. And this was the love that was to outlast life itself! He smiled a little satirically as he thought of the sympathy he had wasted.

Then he asked himself if he, too, could so easily learn to forget, so readily banish the image of Rose Thorne from his heart. The answer came so sharp, and swift, and decisive that he was startled. For the first time he realized how dear she had become to him, and, with the consciousness, came a quick resolve to know his fate at once.

A few moments later he and Rose stood together on the wide, moonlit veranda.

"Rose, when I last spoke of love to you I was pleading another man's cause, and, thank Heaven, I was unsuccessful! Now, I come in my own name to ask for your love. My darling, I have little to offer you but a love as deep and true as man ever offered to woman. Oh, Rose, tell me: am I to receive the same answer?"

The little hands trembled in his, but were not withdrawn, and Phil had no need of any other advocate to plead for him, for Rose's own heart had interceded and won his cause.

The Crimson Cross.

BY TILLIE HARTE.

"It's all very well to talk, Aymar, but depend upon it, this marriage *never* can come to pass."

Kearney Vane looked very sorrowful as he spoke, but his friend, Aymar Starr, only laughed the more heartily.

"A truce to your dismal prophecies, old fellow! With the memory of Clara Selwyn's blue eyes looking into mine, you never can make me believe it."

"No, I don't suppose I can. I only wish I knew how I might convince you."

"Don't undertake it. But, joking aside, Vane, my dear fellow, why will you persist in following me from day to day with this phantom? You are sensible, and not given to nervousness; consequently it is the more unexplainable in you."

Young Starr lit a fresh cigar as he spoke, his handsome face wearing an air of nonchalance and just a trifle of sarcasm.

"To tell the truth, Vane," he went on, "would you really and honestly, now, give up the love of a girl like Clara Selwyn just because you happened to have a crimson cross on your arm?"

"Not merely because I had the crimson cross. But when I know, as you do, Aymar, that that cross is the birthright of a curse, that it is sure to blight whoever comes in contact with it, I should certainly hope that I might find it in my heart to save my lady-love, if not myself."

Kearney Vane spoke in a tone of voice that young Starr knew seriously sincere; he listened, half amused, half vexed, then replied, a little eagerly:

"I am thankful I have no such nervous fears; as for Clara, it seems simply absurd that her happiness should be wrecked because of that trifling sign," as he spoke he turned back his sleeve and glanced at a tiny crimson cross, just above the wrist, on the under side of the arm.

"But, Aymar, you know the sign is a birthright that has cursed the Stars for generations. Whenever has good luck attended the first born, who has, in direct disobedience, dared to marry, or attempt to marry, with that cross blazing on his arm? Do you forget your own father, who was killed a short month after his marriage, or your grandmother, who, bold and brave as you are, dared marry your grandfather? She was stricken with paralysis the hour of her marriage, and died in less than a year. I tell you, Aymar Starr, you must not sacrifice Clara Selwyn, knowing what you do."

An indignant light, he could not suppress, shone in his eyes as he saw how perfectly indifferent young Starr appeared.

"I hardly can imagine myself countermanning the orders for the wedding, my dear, foolish old Vane. As it is, just order a new suit to dance in at the wedding. I'm not afraid; you needn't be."

He sauntered into the street toward Clara Selwyn's house.

It was a quiet, secluded spot, where roses and clematis climbed the white trellises, and amid the silent fragrance Clara was awaiting him.

"You are not afraid?" he asked her, an hour later, when he had told her the legend of the crimson cross.

Her merry laugh was free from superstitious fear as his own question.

"Not a bit, Aymar. Why should I be? How can a little red mark like that bring harm to you or I? I must confess, Aymar, my dearest, that I possess all the bravery that this wonderful nineteenth century grants to us."

"Spoken like my own little darling. Now that the question has once been decided we will never discuss it again. Suppose you take me in now, *ma Clara*, and show me that wonderful bridal dress you are to wear on the morrow."

If the ardent young lover admired the fleecy garments that lay ready for the bride, much more did he appreciate them when, attired in them, Clara Selwyn stood beside him the day following, to promise to be his own forever.

The guests were assembled, and amid the

first faint patterings of an August shower, Aymar and Clara stood before the minister. Without the sky grew darker, and the thunder went crashing over their heads, and Aymar, as he caught the glance of Kearney Vane's eyes, wondered—well, he hardly knew what.

Within, silence reigned, broken only by the voice of the clergyman; then, when the final words were pronounced, the blessing given, and a joyful smile lighted the face of the bride, as her husband took her in his arms and kissed her, came a terrible glare of blinding flame, accompanied by a shrieking crash of thunder, and then, when the startled guests looked at Clara Starr, a cry, full of terror and agony arose; while Kearney Vane rushed to support the bridegroom, who was stunned by the same bolt that had killed his bride!

And on her wrist, just where his hand had lain, was photographed a crimson cross!

Was it a fulfillment of the curse, or was it the result of natural explainable causes?

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Saturday Journal

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AGILE PENNE'S NEW STORY!

THE DETECTIVE'S WARD;

OR,
The Fortunes of a Bowery Girl.

It is with great pleasure that we announce a new serial from the keen and graceful pen of the author of ORANGE NELL. It is a story of New York life, dealing with *living men and women*. The characters walk the streets and breathe the breath of life to-day. It is not fiction, but reality!

The poor child of the streets;

The keen-eyed detective, John Peters;

The wily adventurer, Col. Roland Peyton;

The retired merchant-prince;

The Sixth Ward rough;

The Italian saloon-keeper;

The little boot-black,

figure in a plot, superb in its action and subtle in its nature.

Every American writer has seized upon the peculiar characters that inhabit our great cities and held them up to the gaze of the world, as completely as the careless son of Bohemia, who writes under the name of 'Agile Penne.' Thoroughly understanding city life, he derives his inspiration from nature, not from fancy.

Wielding a trenchant pen, he strikes always for the right. Hence his popularity.

This new city life romance has enlisted his best powers as a writer and observer, and hence, is full of that *vitalism* which is the essential of all great stories; and though abounding in startling situations, novel episodes, in vividly portrayed characters, is as unexceptionable in tone, taste and language as have been all his charming and popular productions.

Foolscap Papers.

The Oracle of the Month.

MAY. BY SCAR.

ACCORDING to the most reliable almanacs, and the robust and hearty constitution of our forefathers, this is the fifth month of the year, occurring after April and previous to June, with the utmost regularity.

The flowers gladden the waysides with their many colors, and invite the weary traveler to rest and repose—dog-fennel, burdock and thistles being the most prevalent. People in the cities sigh to be farmers' boys or farmers' girls, provided there be no work connected with the profession.

City people who have no farms adjoining their houses would do well to plow the dust on their pavements and put it in oats. "Surprise oats" are the best. I planted some of them last May, and went out next morning, and was terribly surprised to see a large forest in the field where the oats were planted, and the next week camp-meeting was held in it, and many persons converted. These oats don't tarry at Jericho for their beads to be grown. You harvest them with an ax or a cross-cut saw. Their yield is about three hundred acres to the bushel, long measure.

Farmers should not be in a hurry to make hay, for if they are slow enough, grass will grow under their feet.

There will be an eclipse of the sun this month every time your plug-hat is knocked down over your eyes, taking your ears with it, pulling them down.

Cows take to the fresh grass like a dozen Nebuchadnezzars, and butter begins to have a good color, and landlords have no excuse for not having good butter on the table, unless it is that it costs more than the other kind.

When the moon is in its first quarter, be sure that you are not out of your last quarter, for to be out of money in May is just as trying, on Christian principles, as it is at any other time.

If you get a notion that the world is coming to an end during this month, I think it would be a good thing for you—indeed, it would be a good thing if you would get such a notion every month.

The first of May is general moving-day in New York, and to people who can't pay their rent, it is a great saving to change landlords.

The leaves burst, the blossoms bloom, and good little boys can have all the fun they desire in climbing for eggs and breaking their necks.

Plant your bean-poles early. Plant eggs for spring chickens in hills three feet apart; they get ripe in about two months.

As the rays of the sun begin to fall heavily, it would be well to dig for your summer clothes. You will find your linen pants in the garret, tied up at the ends, and stuffed full of dried herbs. Of your Marseilles vest you will only find the place where the pocket used to be. Your linen coat, with one sleeve missing, you will find in the woodshed, and your straw hat is under the house, doing duty as a nest for three kittens, with not an eye in the whole lot. Put these on, and get measured for a heavy double-distilled cold, the first evening.

Sow your corn in the forefront of this month, and hire a fashionably-dressed girl to stand in the field as a scarecrow.

Put in a good deal of corn, especially if it is dissolved.

Fresh bonnets begin to bloom, as your wives will take the trouble to inform you, and Japanese silks "are of such lovely patterns, you know!"

Picnics and musketoes begin to make their appearance in the woods.

Plant pumpkin-seed about this time. The Anacosta pumpkin is the best. Drop the seed in the ground and run away, for the vine instantly begins to run, and occasionally overtakes a man and winds itself about him, killing him completely. They are very fast.

Sow your stubbles early, and thrash your children often.

If any young man is in love now, it would be a good time to compromise and get married.

The 16th of May is noted for being the middle of the month.

This is the time to set out your flowers. Make nice beds, so that your neighbor's dogs can come over and sleep on them, or his chickens irritate the soil with their finger-nails. Plant every variety of roses except the early rose potato and the last rose of summer.

Whether it will rain much, or little, or none, during May, will be owing pretty much to the kind of weather we have, but hens will chant their lays, and bull-frogs will open the *hopery* season.

Spring wheat should be drilled according to Hardee's tactics.

There will be an eclipse of the earth to people living on the off-side of the moon.

Persons getting licked during this month will regret it.

WASHINGTON WHITEHORSE.

THE WAVE OF CRIME.

AT the present time a vast current of crime seems to be sweeping over the whole country. Evil-doers are rampant in our midst—everywhere.

Crime is held by some of the able writers of the misty German school to be a disease of the mental system. Whether this theory be true or not, crime is certainly epidemic in its nature.

At one time the newspaper columns teemed with accounts of the doings of the gamblers; every ruffian in the land seemed to think himself bound to garote his victim before he robbed him.

Then, for a time, the rogues devoted their attention to that branch of rascality, commonly called "bond robbery."

At the present time, the drugging business seems to be the popular method. You can hardly pick up a newspaper without finding an account of some man drugged, and then robbed.

A medical journal of no little reputation, a short time ago, made the bold assertion that there was no drug known to medical science that could be administered in a drink and produce immediate insensibility, and one that would be only temporary in its effects.

Of course we do not think for a moment of entering the list against so able an opponent, who should speak by the card; yet, we must take the liberty of doubting the truth of the statement. The records of the police stations contradict it, every day in the week.

Men are first drugged, then robbed in the dens of New York daily.

What shall we oppose to this terrible wave of crime sweeping so resistlessly along?

In our great cities the rascals hold the reins of government, if we may judge by the boldness with which they outrage good citizens and escape punishment for their lawless acts.

We call the Western frontier a lawless country, because the inhabitants have a certain custom of appealing to "Judge Lynch," and the vigilantes rid their communities of the ruffians who plunder and kill the unwary.

Ridiculous as the idea may seem, a vigilance committee would find ample work for its strong arm, right in the midst of crowded New York!

Rascals go unwhipped of justice, and laugh at its power. The goddess of justice is said to be blind: she certainly is in our great metropolis. She seldom sees a rogue, especially if he happens to be a bright and shining light in ward politics, and capable of casting a dozen or more votes on election day.

Some of the insurance companies make their patrons pay extra for permission to travel abroad, particularly if their road tends *southward*. If the city of Gotham continues to grow worse, the insurance men, in self-defense, will have to charge the citizens of the metropolis more than other men, and mark New York policies as "extra hazardous."

What remedy have we against this vast wave of crime?

When the cholera or the small-pox comes upon us, we take measures to guard against it.

Now, instead of locking the crime-diseased man up where he can do no mischief to his fellows, half the time he goes free on straw-bail, and when his crime has passed out of the minds of the people, the indictment against him falls to the ground; he is let loose to commit more acts of violence.

Can it be true that political influence sways our courts of law, that the poor wretch who steals a few pennies receives prompt punishment, and the "rough," who murders a good citizen, escapes scot-free?

Are our laws made to protect honest men, or to favor rogues? Is a peaceable man safer in the rough far West than in New York city? We pause for a reply.

REFLECTED MERIT!

The manner in which some of our contemporaries are copying our typographical features, and imitating our general "make-up," is evidence of the estimation which even our rivals place on the SATURDAY JOURNAL. The general beauty of our text and the high standard of our matter, in its popular excellence, both struck a new key-note in popular journalism; and the great success which has followed our efforts to produce at once a good and a beautiful paper very naturally excited our competitors to changes which seemed imperative if they would not be left wholly in the background.

We rejoice at all this. It only goes to prove that our paper is a model one; and we can afford to permit imitation and copying, since all such dodges to please the public are so palpably bad imitations that the SATURDAY JOURNAL is tacitly confessed to be on the lead.

One thing, however, these copyists can not imitate. They may add departments and features similar to our own; but they never can attain to our standard in matter, for they have not the sagacity to detect that peculiar excellence which makes the popular writer. We have had too many years' experience as publishers, and know the subtle power there is in certain qualities of mind, to make *the* experiments which other publishers, even of papers of large circulation, are almost constantly attempting. We know, almost unerringly, what will please and in what form it will best appear; hence, almost from the start our journal thrilled the public of intelligent readers—those who appreciate what is good; and to-day the SATURDAY JOURNAL is regarded by the Trade and the public as one of the best and most beautiful Family Papers every published in America.

AN UTTER ABSURDITY.

THERE is one habit indulged in by lady authors, that, to any independent or spirited woman, is gall and wormwood. I allude to the way some of them have of making their female characters mental nonentities—mere living and breathing machines, subject, it is true, to anger and jealousy, but no matter how treated by their lovers, always ready to come at their beck, fall at their feet, and worship as of old, before they were ill-used and slighted.

If the object of their affection is fickle and vacillating, and takes a fancy to another pretty face, it is never *he* that they blame; no, he is guiltless as an angel; it is the woman, who, by her alluring arts has fascinated him, that is 'solely to blame!' and her they hate with an undying hatred, and would, if it were possible to do so and escape the consequences, murder her; but *he* is a poor, innocent lamb, that has been deceived away by the wolf; and they wait, year after year, for him to return to his allegiance, which, if he does not do, they charitably ascribe to the fault of the woman, and die an old maid, true to the last to his memory. If he should tire of the second love and return to the first, they are ready to fall on his neck and embrace him, readily forgive him and take him back, very glad of the chance to do so, and very angry at the woman who allured him away, but thankful that she didn't quite devour him while he was helpless in her evil clutches.

All this is touchingly related by the said lady authors, with a hundred aggravating incidents peculiar to the situation, and pathetic excuses for the shallowness of the proceeding, about "being a woman."

It is no wonder that men accuse women of being weak-minded and insipid, when they make themselves so utterly ridiculous.

No wonder that they consider them inferior in good sense and judgment to themselves! How can women can bring herself to make herself and sex appear so perfectly silly beyond my comprehension. If she is so spiritless herself, for goodness sake let her lay especial claim to such insipidity, but, in the name of sensible women, I protest against her trying to make it appear that the whole female sex is so, by excusing her character on the ground that "she is a woman," as if that was an excuse for any absurdity.

I have studied human nature assiduously since I moved at the dignity of long dresses, but I have not found out my satisfaction what it is that makes some women so amiable, and angelic, and ready to forgive any thing in a man; unless it is because it is a MAN, and, while I have suspicions that it is the exact key to the mystery, I would not hint such a thing for the world! Nobody ever reads of a young lady who possesses a lover, becoming so desperately enamored of another gentleman that she totally ignores his existence for an indefinite period of time, no, such a proceeding on the part of a woman is wholly incompatible with her true and constant mind. If she should do such a thing, her lover would by no means overlook it when she became disposed to return her flickering affections to him. By no means! If *his* charms are not powerful enough to preclude the possibility of any other fellow's charms becoming apparent, she is not the woman for him! He is not going to be snubbed in that way. No *girl* besides, if she had any mind she would not be so inconstant.

Exactly so! but, with a man it is different, you know! A man can be oblivious to all the bright eyes and cherry lips about him, because he has laid especial claim to *one* pair; of course not. Who shall blame him for being bewitched by them, even if he totally forgets, for a time, that other woman who is "all the world to him?" "He is only human," and the woman who loves him keeps this fact in view. But, the woman who allures his heart from her, she is not "only human," she is a vile, artful, designing creature, who has spied this innocent lamb in broadcloth and patent leathers, and taken base advantage of his guilelessness to win him from his rightful allegiance.

I am dreadfully tired and impatient of this mawkish silliness, and I dare say there are other women who are "strong minded" enough to be in the same situation. And I must confess that I am inhuman and unnatural enough to consider the "artful woman" quite as innocent as the "bewitched man," and a little more so! If I didn't have a better opinion of my sex than I could gain from the stories under consideration, I should expect to have an invitation to travel with Barnum's new show after making that confession!

LETTIE ANTELEY IRONS.

DREAMS.

LET us draw our chairs near the window, this lovely day, and let us dream of a dream. Let us dream of the time when we wore short dresses, and talked about that eventful period which we styled, "when I grew up." Oh, how much we were going to do! We believed we could so arrange matters that politicians wouldn't quarrel; that we wouldn't let anybody teach us what we should wear; that that would be in our power to prevent people from saying all manner of hard things against us. We didn't dream of lowering our sex so far as to appear before a promiscuous audience, and rant and rave about our supposed wrongs.

But we *did* wonder whom we should marry when we arrived at that very solemn period of our existence. One little pale-faced thing wanted to marry an author, for she believed that, in his stories of love, he could never forget her, and that he would always address her in poetic language. Poor Etta! Her husband is a pianoforte tuner, and his language is a very poetic, as he says: "Etta, I do wish you'd read less, and study the art of putting on buttons thoroughly." He is a good man, for all that.

Then, there was Bessie Dana—a wild, free-hearted girl, whose hair was always in disorder; her ambition was to be a jolly fat grocer, so she could have plenty of nuts, and raisins, and oranges! She didn't get her wish, for she is wife to a coffin-maker, and makes shrouds and grave-clothes for a living! Her songs were always in the maddest, merriest strains; now her voice is more subdued, and little hymns warble up from her throat, just as if her occupation made her sad.

And what became of all those romping boys, who used to hide behind the trees, and scare us nearly out of our senses, if we ventured into the road after dark? How we used to make fun of a certain sober young fellow, named Harry, because he always was telling us how we ought to behave!

Yes; and we felt sad when we read of his death in the papers. He gave his life for his country.

Well, when we are young we are extremely thoughtless. Then we dream of that roughish fellow, George Chase, who had such an appetite that we'd get him all the eatables we could scare up, and, in return, he'd relate ghost-stories, until we imagined every tree was a specter, and every stump a coffin.

We dream that we had an "awful" spite against the school-teacher, and wished he could be made to suffer for keeping us after school, when we wanted to go nutting. How our feelings changed when we saw his bowed form leaning over the grave of his wife! He spoke kindly to us, and we cowered away, like guilty creatures. We would have given a great deal, could we have comforted him.

Then we dream of how grandma always used to take her knitting and go into another part of the house, when our beaux came to see us. Ah! the dear old soul remembered her own courting days, and murmured: "Young folks will be young folks."

Do we ever dream of a happy hour in the autumn, when we sat beneath some maple-tree, hand-in-hand with him we loved, and promised to try to make him happy for life, and how he said he would never cease to love us? Do we dream he broke his promise, and left us to mourn his fickleness?

No! we dreamed he was true.

We dream many a strange thing; and, for that very reason, we love to wander away into dream-land. We are made better for these dreams. They make us more thoughtful in our actual life.

"Grandma Lawless, don't tell me tea is ready, for I love to sit here and dream," I say, as my good grandma summons me to supper.

"Well, child," is her practical answer, "if you're drowsy yourself, you've no business to make everybody else so."

Grandma is right, of course! So pleasant dreams to you, dear reader!

EVE LAWLESS.

SHIFTLESSNESS.

WHAT makes people so shiftless, when a mere trifle would remedy the fault? A hinge on the gate gets loose, but the shiftless farmer thinks it will last a while longer, and when it comes to actual mending, he will see about it. There the gate hangs, an eyesore to everybody. Some day, a gale comes on, the gate goes down, and the cattle get into the field, eating up more than it would have cost the farmer to put on the hinge, properly, in the first place.

In several villages, you will notice, at the post-office, a number gone from a box here, and another one there; day after day, and month after month it is the same, until you know that a certain box belongs to Mr. Such-and-such, because it is over Number 17. Now, a pair of scissors would cut a number out of any old newspaper, and only a trifle of paste would be required to place it in its proper location. It is a scene of immense shiftlessness, the dirty windows and unnumbered letter-boxes of some village post-offices.

A man going down-town, will perhaps burst a button off his vest; it is replaced by a pin; he argues that it isn't advisable to put a new button on an old vest. Poor reasoning, and the pin makes everybody exclaim: "How shiftless!"

People, in writing for the Press, forget to dot their "i's" and cross their "t's," and then wonder why the printers make so many mistakes! A little carelessness would make your manuscript more perfect, and save you from the anathemas of the printer. Call them "trifles," if you will; but remember that these trifles make perfection.

How shiftless persons are, in leaving off reading a portion of a book, to place it on a chair, extended open, when the next visitor will, no doubt, sit on it, and break the covers of the book! Book-marks are cheap, and probably there is no apartment in a house but has a table or a shelf to lay the book on.

Shiftlessness is a poor habit to get into, and makes no one wiser, happier, or better. It wins no battles, achieves no successes, and conquers no enemies; but it does hold one back from becoming nobler or more successful. It demeans one in the estimation of those who have brought thoughtfulness and carefulness to their aid, which has placed them in a high position, while their shiftless neighbors look on in mute despair, wondering why they have not been as "lucky." Luck had naught to do with it. It was pluck and perseverance.

F. S. F.

LOVE.

WHO is he in youth, or in maturity, or even in old age, who does not like to hear of those sensibilities which turn curled heads around at church, and send wonderful eye-beams across assemblies from one to one, never missing in the thickest crowd? The keen statistic reckons by tens and hundreds; the genial man is interested in every slipper that comes into the assembly. The passion, alike everywhere, creeps under the snows of Scandinavia, under the fires of the equator, and swims in the seas of Polynesia. Love is as present a divinity in the Norse Edda as Canadae in the red vault India, Eros in the Greek, or Cupid in the Latin heaven. And what is especially true of love is that it is a state of extreme impressionability; the lover has more sense and finer senses than others; his eye and ear are telegraphs; he reads omens on the flower, the cloud and face, and form and gesture, and reads them aright. In his surprise at the sudden and entire understanding that is between him and the loved person, it occurs to him that they might somehow meet independently of time and place. How delicious the belief that he could elude all guards, precautions, ceremonies, means and delays, and hold instant and semipiternal communication! In solitude, in banishment, the hope returned, and the experiment was eagerly tried. The supernal powers seem to take his part. What was on his lips to say was uttered by his friend. When he went abroad, he met, by wonderful casualties, the one person he sought. If in his walk he chanced to look back, his friend was walking behind him. And it has happened that the artist has often drawn in his pictures the face of the future wife he had not seen.

The light of nature, a good judgment, and due consideration of things, tend more to true reasoning than all the happiness of moods and figures.

Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in postage.—No MSS. preserved for future orders.—Unusable MSS. promptly returned only when their accuracy is indicated, for such return.—Book MSS. postage is two cents for every four ounces, or fraction thereof, but must be marked "Book MSS." and be sealed in wrappers with open end, in order to pass the mails. "Book rates."—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Book MSS."—MSS. which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon exactness of MS., as copy of the length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. Use Commercial Note size paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, leaving off each page as it is written, and carefully giving it its folio or page number.—A rejection by no means implies a want of merit. Many MSS. unavailable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their offerings early attention.—Contributors must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

"The Little Match Girl" is wholly unavailable. No stamps.—"A Pad Head and a Good Heart" is not as good as the title would insinuate. The writer must not "go beyond his depth" in the literary sea, for the big breakers of criticism, and the terrible undertow of editorial requisitions will be sure to render a corner necessary.—We can use "Fruitfully Followed."—The Mad Lover, "The Tenth Doctor."—Can not find place for "Tell Me Not." It may do for a first attempt but is much too crude for our standard.—The same time as "A Song for Spring." To ask pay for such compositions is proof that the writer is a "new hand."—We shall have to return the MS. "Strategy," and "Matthe's Elopement." We do not care to stock up with such sketches, and have already in hand as many as it is possible, at present, to place on the accepted list. Can not use poem, "No more." It is as specific enough for an age country.—Poem, "A Souvenir," is almost good enough but not quite up to our requisitions.—We return the MS. "The Tenth Doctor," having a surfeit of that class of matter.—MS., "Ruly Hues," unavailable, and, as a composition, quite imperfect, as author will see by editor's review of his last page. MS. returned.—"The Tenth Doctor," "Cherbourg Picture," etc. Have written author.—Will use "Pep Behind the Curtain." We return MS., "A Woman's Time," as a return series of papers by Rev. John T. E., as not being adapted to a popular paper. We thank the author heartily for his good opinion expressed of the SATURDAY JOURNAL. When ministers say, after a critical examination, that our paper is unexceptionable, in manner and matter, we have no need of flattery. Our readers there is at least one Popular Family Weekly which it is safe to introduce to the Firesides and Homes of America.

Edw. B. W. is thanked for the interest he takes in our paper. "Boys' Stories," as a usual thing, are very weak mental food. We treat our boy editors and readers as if they knew something, and shall always make it a feature of the SATURDAY JOURNAL to cater to the youth of America in stories and romances which it will do them good to read, as well as interest them. We may say, now, that we have in hand a splendid series of papers, expressly designed for boys, which will soon commence. Look out for them, Master Frank!

"Several Readers" are informed that another Indian romance, by the celebrated author referred to, will, in due course of time, be given in these columns. That now running, "The Tenth Doctor," is a story of great interest and power, and will give fine satisfaction. The Noble Baron Chief is, especially, a splendid creation. It pays to peruse such productions.

W. V. The "Witches of New York" is now a drama, but the author proposes soon to write it out as a serial for our paper. A taking serial it will be. Copies containing the serial will be sent to subscribers for seventy-five cents. The humorous author named is not at present writing for any popular paper. The corps of humor writers of the SATURDAY JOURNAL, exclusively, on the SATURDAY JOURNAL, is the most admirable and brilliant ever employed on one Weekly paper.

The recompositions submitted by Thomas C. of West Virginia, are much too crude for publication; but crude and rude as they are they betray true poetic feeling—which is more than can be said of half the "polished verses" published in our papers and magazines. Good rhetoric is so largely, nowadays, a substitute for good ideas that Thomas C. would fare badly at a hundred of our editors, for his rhetoric to scene and setting; but if he can study and perfect himself in the art of composition he may hope to write with success.

PHILIP K. T. The publishers keep all of BEADLE'S DIME BOOKS in stock; and, as announced in the advertising columns, the books can be had singly or in sets. This is a great advantage for all for all" very feasible. When, for one dollar, any person can receive, free of charge, TWELVE BOOKS, these certainly is no small thing, and will be a great inducement to good reading matter. Cheap and good is the motto of the publishers of these ubiquitous books.

G. D. Scranton, Pa., We have no desire to enter into a discussion of the questions involved in the differences between the Coal miners and the Mine proprietors. It is the old question of supremacy of labor or capital. A wise generation will not permit these differences by reconciling capital and labor, making each reciprocal and mutually dependent. "The dreadful results of a strike will be the ruin of the Coal-Miners never to be entailed, again, upon the miners nor upon the community, and we trust the settlement of this question will be to the satisfaction to both workmen and capitalists."

B. J. WELLS and F. B. Volume 1 of the SATURDAY JOURNAL, 52 Nos., will cost you \$2.60.

PIRGAN writes that he is very nervous and wishes advice as to what will steady his nerves. It is almost impossible to answer orders and queries. Consult a doctor. The habits and constitution of the patient must be understood before judicious advice can be given. We have doubts whether the parties you inquire about. We should not advise you to send the money.

ALEXANDER WATSON. Your subscription expired with No. 56. Have received nothing from you since.

MILTON. The Lyceum was a celebrated place near the banks of the Nile, in Attica, where Aristotle taught philosophy. Its modern identification is an institution for lectures on science, literature, etc.

G. E. H. John of Arc was burned in the market place of Rouen in 1431. It was a cruel deed, one of the most barbarous that stains the page of history.

A. G. C. LAURENCE wishes advice. He writes that there is a young lady of his acquaintance, of whom he is very fond; that he has invited her to go to a great many places of amusement, etc., but she always refuses. He is very anxious to get acquainted to find some other young lady, not quite so hard-hearted. It is very evident that his company is not agreeable to the young lady, and, of course, it is just possible that, by constant attention, the lady's opinion may be changed.

QUEEN CITY. We have on hand a story, the scene of which is located in your city. It will appear as soon as we can find room for it.

STUDENT. Yes; you are right. Fresh water begins to freeze at 32 degrees, called the freezing point, but salt water freezes at a lower temperature. The motion called heat, and became fixed as crystals.

X. Y. Z. asks: "Is a lawyer an honest man or a rogue?" It is a difficult question to answer. It depends altogether upon the individual. Lawyers are no better and no worse than other men.

CLIFFORD CLIFTON writes: "I have been corresponding with a young lady for the past six months; have taken her to quite a number of parties, and to various places of amusement. I am well satisfied that she will make me a good wife, but I am young (only twenty), and do not believe in early marriages. I became engaged to the lady about a month ago, and circumstances have since transpired which compel me either to marry or to break the engagement. I became known to her father, he instantly forbade my visiting his daughter. I have tried several times to see her, but he has always refused to let me, but he refuses to give them. It is possible that some stories have got to his ears, that I was a little wild, some two years back, but I supposed that I had outlived them. Now, what am I to do? I have a clerkship in one of the largest firms in our town, and a salary amply sufficient to support a wife. Should I marry the lady, or should I wait

WHO'S TO BLAME?

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.

Out in the street a little child
Was begging night and morn;
Her form was thin, her face was sad
Her garments were well worn;
With poverty and sorrow
Her little heart was torn.

"Oh, pity, stranger—pity me!
And some assistance lend
A helpless little wanderer
Without a home or friend!"
Such was her plaintive story—
A story without end.

Day after day she told it thus;
By some she was believed,
But others thought if help they'd give
They'd only be deceived,
And so kept back the penny
By which she'd been relieved.

Can it be such a wonder, then,
Or would she be to blame
While leading such a life as that
She'd strike the path of shame?
And follow—blindly follow—
Till to her grave she came?

So you who know what 'tis to be
Without a home or friend,
I'm sure that you will pity take
And some assistance lend
To those with that sad story—
That story without end!

Unexpected Deliverance;
OR,
A DEBT OF GRATITUDE.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.

"Hist! Andy, there she comes now!"
"I see. We'll nab her in a minute if she keeps on."

The speakers were crouching down amid a clump of shrubbery behind a small vine-wreathed arbor, near the end of a large garden. They had been lying here for nearly an hour, and it was evident that their designs were not the most friendly. The reverse of that, or they would not have taken so much care to keep concealed whenever one of the slaves chanced to pass near.

One—the first speaker—was a medium-sized man, of apparently five and twenty years of age, well-built and muscular, garbed in a half-hunter suit of gray cloth. In features he was handsome; uncommonly so, in fact.

His companion was one of that peculiarly Southern class, almost nondescript, termed "crackers," sand-hillers, clay-eaters, poor white trash, and a dozen similar sobriquets, far from complimentary. His dress was greasy and rough, tattered and mud-be-smear. They were armed alike, with knife and pistols.

Their gaze was directed toward the low, rambling white house, that looked more like a cluster of buildings than one alone. A woman had just stepped out of the side-door and was slowly sauntering toward the small arbor, beside which the two men crouched.

A light scarf was thrown over her head, and as she strolled leisurely along, her gaze fixed upon the pages of a book held in one hand. Even at that distance it could be seen that she was of more than ordinary beauty, both of face and form.

A perfect brunette, with luxuriant hair, shining with a blue-black tinge, large, lustrous eyes, now veiled by the long, fringed lids; a tall, superbly rounded figure, that moved with a peculiar grace; such was Marie Dupont.

She slowly neared the arbor, and intent upon the passage she was reading, paused by it unconsciously, the path making a curve that placed the vine-wreathed arbor between her and the house. Then a rustling sound startled her, and she glanced up with a slight exclamation.

But, ere she had time to scream, or, indeed, divine the peril that threatened her, a blanket was cast over her head, effectually stifling all outcry, and she was borne to the ground.

"Quick, Andy—take hold of her and help me over the fence. If seen now, our lives would not be worth a penny!" whispered the younger of the two men, who was apparently the leader.

"You're mighty right, cap'n! Hyar—han' her over to me—so."

"Now for the horses! We must ride fast, or they may find out their loss soon enough to make it a race of life or death!"

The two abductors conveyed the senseless girl rapidly through the woods until a couple of strong horses were reached. The younger man mounted, and, supporting Marie before him, led the way at a rapid pace through the swampy woods.

For good three miles they rode, breaking their trail, as they thought, effectually, by means of the sluggish streams and ponds of water, here and there, until, finally, they came out upon a clearing, where stood a building upon a little knoll of ground. A hideous-looking, thick-set negro met them at the door, with a malignant smile upon his features, saluting the young man as "Marse Poullens."

"You, Tom, open the doors to the north room," cried Poullens, dismounting, and carrying his half-unconscious captive into the house.

He gently placed her upon a couch, and then turning, left her alone.

"Tom, where is Curtin?"

"Out dar in de 'table, sleepin', I's peet."

"Go tell him to come here and finish his work. I want this end boarded up before I get back. The lazy scoundrel! he should have had it done long ago. Wait—Look here, Tom, can you keep a secret?"

"Lor', Marse Frank, reckon I kin! Jes' try me—dat's all."

"Well, then, I don't want you to let any one know who is in that room. Don't let any one go in, or her come out. Do you understand?"

The negro nodded assent.

"Very well. Do this, and when I come back you can get as drunk as you please. I'm to be married to-night, Tom. Why, boy, what are you looking so frightened about?"

"What'll of Tom do den? You'll bre'k up de band?"

"No. I will still keep it running. So don't fret. But, go now and call Curtin. Make haste."

The darky darted off and soon returned with a tall, gaunt man, another specimen of the genus "cracker." Then Poullens mounted his horse and rode off, while Tom explained what Curtin was to do.

That worthy set about his task with a look of disgust upon his homely features. Tom disappeared for a moment, and then returning with a huge, rusty, bell-mouthed blunderbuss, took a station beside the door that opened into the room where was the captive.

"What's that fer, Tom?" demanded Curtin, uneasily.

"Nuffin much. An'y Morse he done got a ephelunt in dar. Tole me to keep 'im in fer fear he'd git out an' hurt you—yah! yah!"

"Who is it in thar, Tom?"

"None o' your business. You go 'long to work, now, 'fo' I bust you fool head!"

growled the negro.

As it grew dark, Tom lighted a candlestick in a block attached to the wall, and then, with a prolonged yawn, seated himself upon the floor. Presently his huge head began to droop, and then a steady snore announced that he had fallen asleep. The door behind him opened, and Marie stood revealed to the wondering gaze of the "cracker."

"Miss Dupont—you here?"

"Hist! Don't wake him," whispered Marie, as Tom stirred.

He raised his head, muttering some unintelligible words, and then began to nod once more. Curtin feared to speak, but picking up a piece of red keel, wrote upon one of the boards:

"Can I help you?"

"Yes; take me home," answered Marie, slowly tracing the letters one by one in the air with her forefinger.

"Step back and shut the door," wrote the man, and then as Marie noiselessly withdrew, he paused as if to meditate.

He hesitated only for a moment, and then raising a heavy piece of oaken board, brought it down with fearful force upon the bowed head of the negro. It was well aimed, and Tom sunk forward in a heap with a terribly shattered skull; not uttering a moan. Curtin drew him into one corner and partially concealed him beneath some boards, and then turned once more toward the door.

Marie stood there, pale but composed. She had heard the horrible crushing sound, but knowing that by such a course only could she hope to escape, did not regret the deed.

"Come, Miss Marie, we must hurry. There's no tellin' when some o' the boys may come back. Thar's hosses in the stable; we kin git them an' ride to your house."

While Curtin is saddling the animals a word of explanation may not be amiss. For several years during the decade preceding the late war, a portion of South Carolina was infested by a daring and ruthless band of outlaws. One of their leaders—although

was the strife. The combatants were wild—mad, and scarcely knew who they were fighting.

Their cuts and thrusts were dealt at random. Friend struck friend as often as enemy. There was no thought of retreating—no thought of asking or giving quarter.

They were clenched in each other's arms, and for a horrible ten minutes the conflict continued. Thus it closed, and one man arose. It was Curtin.

He glanced around him and staggered to his horse, that still stood near him. Then he reeled and fell to the ground, dead!

He had paid his debt of gratitude with his life!

Marie soon gave the alarm, but assistance came too late to aid her rescuer. All they could do was to afford him a Christian burial.

How the outlaw band was finally broken up does not concern this sketch.

Marie Dupont—long since married—still lives near the scene of her abduction.

Iva's Bridegroom.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

OVER the snow-bound landscape the cold, steady glimmer of the stars looked down, till their far-away twinkling shone among the warm, cheery lights that streamed from the windows of the Forrester farm-house.

In the front room, up-stairs, pretty little Iva Forrester ditted to and fro, her pink cheeks flushing with delighted pride as she folded and arranged the dainty garments in the tall trunk, and laid carefully in their places rustling ribbons and feathery laces.

"I almost envy you, Iva, the splendid times you are sure to have in New York, at your aunt Ethelyn's."

It was a tall, dark-haired, brown-eyed girl that spoke—Iva's confidential friend, and a girl who was proud and pretty.

Iva's violet eyes raised to Madge Velmer's.

"Won't it be splendid? I feel as if I never can wait until Tuesday to start, and here to-night is only Friday!"

"And then, when you do go, you'll forget us all, I'm sure!"

"Madge! you know better than that. As if I could ever forget mother and you, and home."

Madge Velmer, her keen brown eyes lighted with a sudden brilliance, suffered the ruby-red lips to curl in a smile—of what?

"So you think you are going to enjoy yourself?"

Mrs. Ethelyn had come silently and suddenly in while Iva Forrester was arranging her beautiful hair, with as artistic an eye, and as deft a hand, as Mrs. Ethelyn's own French Euphrasie herself possessed.

"Indeed I am! Why, aunt Constance, it seems to me as if this glorious New York was but a step removed from fairy-land! Every thing is so elegant—so refined!"

Iva's eyes grew luminous as they dilated with her sweet enthusiasm, and Mrs. Ethelyn smiled amusedly.

"Only because it is such a novel change to you, dear. Wait a twelvemonth, and then if you can say the same, you are the first woman I ever saw who could. It's all very empty, Iva, child, this gay, glittering show."

"But it's so nice, aunt Constance! I thought, last night, at Mrs. Lissington's, I could cry for very bliss!"

A sad smile crept around Mrs. Ethelyn's eyes, and she stooped nearer the fair, flushed face.

"It was because of Warren Desmond's presence, little Iva. I was not blind—nor, I think, was he—to your sweet face and arch manners."

Then a deeper-dyed flush stained Iva's face.

"Surely, he can't care for me, so—so soon, aunt Constance?"

"But you have not forgotten last summer? I'm very sure Mr. Desmond loves you, my child."

What brought the remembrance of a pale, haughtily-bred face before her, lighted with Austin Stewart's black eyes?

And the while a wild, delicious thrill of joy surged through her brain and heart.

Warren Desmond! her ideal of all that was manly, all that was perfection, loved her!

How sweet it was to indulge the simple probability—ay, the bare possibility; how far better fitted to her tastes, her aspirations, would be this stylish lover—yes, she would whisper the thought despite the red blushes—her husband would suit her so much better than a plain, retiring farmer—and then, with another queer pain at her heart, she forgot what she was thinking about.

She reigned belle that night; her fresh,

slept on his pillow for thirty long years, went after her, under the autumn leaves that lay, golden and scarlet, in a heap over her grave.

And Iva, sad-eyed, heart-sore, with no voices to call her in the horrid silence of the house, barred its oaken shutters and went to Aunt Ethelyn's.

Not to mingle in the gayety—she had gotten forever past that; but, because she yearned so for some loving voice—perhaps, for Warren Desmond's.

She may have been very wrong to have cherished a remembrance of him; but do not forget how weak through suffering she was, how aged and starving her heart had grown; and now, that Austin Stewart was forever lost—Warren Desmond might—well, she half-despised herself as she inquired of Mrs. Ethelyn.

"Mr. Desmond? Bless you, Iva, my dear, he was married last month—"

It was all Iva heard, but it was enough; she made a little deprecating gesture, and Mrs. Ethelyn read it in her eyes.

"My poor lamb!"

Tall marble shafts, wreath-crowned, uprising from heaps of drifted snow, like ghastly, giant fingers; long mounds, covered with the white winding-sheet; shorter graves, where slept, dreamlessly, many a once warm-hearted, full-pulsed dreamer; solemn evergreens bending and heavily swaying under their cold burden.

That was the scene, at the early morning, that Austin Stewart saw, with wide, tearless eyes, and firm-set lips.

A short, snow-bound mound, with a low tombstone, and the name he loved engraved thereon.

Iva Forrester, Aged 23.

That was all—no, a wreath of exquisite immortelles that he saw bore a tiny card; and the name was

"MRS. WARREN DESMOND."

He almost tore it from the headstone; then, breaking it in sweet, fragrant sprays, flung it fiercely away.

"How dare she, the wife of him who won her from me, and then broke her heart—how dare she lay this offering on her grave? oh, Iva, my darling! my own darling! my lost one!"

It was pitiful, this man's wailing agony; then, he suddenly drew himself erect, and with folded arms stood gazing down on the resting-place of her he had so loved.

Just beside him, so near he might almost have touched her, was a dark-eyed, dark-haired woman—you would have known Madge Velmer the moment you saw her. She leaned forward, with bated breath, listening to his bitter grief; then, when he had turned listlessly away, she let her eyes wander after him.

"Months and years I have toiled and schemed for your love, Austin Stewart, and now I know I never can win you from her memory. Little wrecked she it was my representations that kept you from her side all those weeks of agony she endured; little dreamed you, to-day, the truth—that she loved you, and only you, to the end!"

"Well, sometimes I wonder if ever I can be forgiven for it all? Her pitiful face never leaves me. I see her now, down under the snow, so broken, so reproachful, so anguished—the bride of her Specter Bridegroom, Death!"

She paused, and let go her hold on the white hood she wore, and gazed half-weakly about the solemn cemetery.

"And I—I am drawn hither to her grave by some weird magnetism; nightly I am constrained to come—in the rain or the freezing cold, as to-night; little dreaming I should ever again see him—him! And I am so cold, so weary, so drowsy! I wonder if she suffered when she died—I wonder—if I—will?"

She drooped softly down to where Austin Stewart had scattered the white waxen blossoms.

On the morrow, when the sun came out, some one found a woman frozen to death, near Iva Forrester's grave; her handkerchief was marked, "M. V."

"With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

Hoodwinked:

OR,
DEAD AND ALIVE.

A Tale of Man's Perfidy and Woman's Faith.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.,
AUTHOR OF "RALPH HANON, THE CHEMIST," "THE WARNING ARROW," ETC.

[TO THE READER. The transposition, which lately occurred, whereby the *Fourth* installment of this story was given before the *Third* installment, was one of those mistakes in the form "make-up" to which every printing-room is liable, but which we hope will not soon again occur in our rooms. The reader, doubtless, understood the nature of the mistake, and waited in patience for the missing link in the story, which followed, in the succeeding issue.]

CHAPTER XIII.

OLD MADGE.

THE bull-fighter wrapped his heavy cloak about him, and hurried on through the streets, turning numerous corners, and anon passing through courts and alleys, in order to make his homeward route the nearer. As he walked along, he muttered half-aloud, cursing the distance that was necessary to be traversed ere he could partake of his evening meal. Alternately mumbling and swearing, with his eyes fixed upon the pavement, he abruptly came upon three men who stood before the entrance to a gambling hall noted for its richness of interior and flourishing business.

At sight of Diego Perez, one of the men said to his companions: "Here comes the Spaniard now."

Though it was not intended for Diego's ears, he heard it, and instantly paused in his walk.

"Well, it is I. What then?" he demanded.

"Have you ought to say?"

One of them, a young man of not more than twenty-five years, but whose features indicated dissipation, stepped forward, saying:

"So Diego Perez comes to try his luck at cards again to-night, eh? Are you possessed of considerable money that you wish to lose?"

"The first is a lie! The second is impudence! Are you suited in my answer, Viscount Berkeley?" and Diego gazed with open contempt upon the slenderly-formed, foppish yet attired individual who addressed him.

But he perceived that those who were with the young Viscount were not of his own rank. They were men with bearded faces, dark features, dark eyes, muscular limbs; and seemed as if waiting for a word



UNEXPECTED DELIVERANCE.

outside of the band he was not even suspected—was Frank Poullens.

He loved Marie Dupont, and, proposing, had been rejected, simply because he was not loved. He received the blow calmly, and professed to feel no rancor against her. But this calmness was only outwardly.

He had resolved to possess her, if not by fair means, then by foul. We have seen how he had abducted the maiden, and his intention was to force her to wed him, if possible. If not, then he had a still blacker plan.

Curtin was one of the secret League, and Marie had won his gratitude by her acts of kindness to his family when ill and almost starving. He had sworn that he would repay her, with his very life, if need be, and now that he saw the longed-for opportunity, he gladly embraced it.

The horses were speedily prepared, and, mounting, the two fugitives rode out of the clearing, heading toward the plantation from which Marie had been abducted. The moon was near its full, and shone down with a brilliancy that rendered objects nearly as distinct as at noonday.

They had reached a point where another path crossed theirs at right-angles, when the sound of horses' hoofs startled them. To their dismay Poullens and two followers dashed out into the wood behind them.

The trail was narrow, only allowing one to pass abreast, while a deep, miry slough bordered either side, that would engulf a horse and rider almost instantly.

"Halt!" furiously cried the outlaw leader, as he saw his prize escaping him. "Halt! or I fire!"

"Run for it, Miss Marie! run for your life!" cried Curtin, turning his horse to face the outlaws, and raising his rifle. "Shoot, an' be burned to ye, then!" he added, as the maiden urged her horse at breakneck speed toward the haven of safety.

"Ride over the devil—shoot him down! Fifty pounds to the one that catches that girl!" cried Poullens, firing a pistol at Curtin; but his aim was disturbed by the plunging of his horse, and the ball only knocked the hat from the brave man's head.

"Thar's another—tit for tat, darn ye!" shrieked the cracker, his rifle-bullet piercing the outlaw leader's brain.

Then came a terrible confused *melee*. The two survivors urged their horses forward, and the three animals came into collision; that of Curtin's going down before the shock, and the others stumbling headlong over it.

Pistol-shots rung out—knife-thrusts were given; and shouts of rage, curses of pain, or a death-yell of agony told how bitter

There was a charming indignation in her manner.

"And Austin Stewart?"

Madge Velmer's dark eyes were intently watching any chance glow on Iva's cheeks; her voice was soft and low, yet Iva started. The idea! Why should I remember Austin Stewart more than any one else? I tell you, Madge, he's nothing to me.

"Perhaps not, Iva; but I am very positive you are all the world to him."

Iva laughed, as she held up a blue sash to her waist.

"Is this long enough, Madge? I'm sure I can't help it if Mr. Stewart chooses to fall in love with me. Can I?"

"I suppose not."

Yet Miss Velmer's tones were a little unnatural as she spoke, and Iva saw a far-off look in her brown eyes.

"I can tell you, Madge," Iva went on. "I have planned out a far different sort of life from that which Austin Stewart's wife must lead. I am sick of farm-houses and chickens, counting the pigs and skimming the cream. I shall marry some city gentleman, who shall love to see me gay and admired. Austin Stewart's wife—pshaw!"

Poor, ignorant, pretty child! So natural—so human!

"Well," returned Madge, "I do not agree with you. I think Austin Stewart a king among men; fit for—well, I will not dilate upon the subject; you may infer I am interested."

A slight flush tinged her smooth cheeks, but Iva was too busily engaged to note it.

"Oh, you may have him and welcome, so far as I am concerned. Then I will have a chance to come to his horrid red stone house on a visit in the summer, when I am Mrs."

She laughed, flushed, and hesitated.

"Iva, no!" suddenly spoke Madge. "It can not be possible your silly head has been turned by that gentleman staying at the village in the summer? Iva, he might have been married for all we know."

"Indeed, he was not! I know he wasn't, because he is a friend of aunt Ethelyn's, and very rich, and he told cousin Jessie he admired me very much."

"And so you are building upon that foundation? Well, Iva, 'be warned,' is all I can say, and remember—"

"That Austin Stewart can learn to forget in a day or so! I will, thank you."

Iva laughed as she finished Madge Velmer's sentence, so differently from the way that young lady would have done. And Iva glided fairly down the stairs to the family sitting-room to consult mother about the fluting on the traveling-dress; and

blooming beauty, her arch, natural grace, was a rare combination of charms to those city gentlemen, and she reveled in the homage she excited.

But of all, above all, Warren Desmond's eyes shone for her, and his low, witching voice sung in her ears; rapidly she drifted further and further away from her old-time life, and then, from her delicious dream in which she waked and slept, came the awakening summons to come back to the old homestead; the mother was ill to the death.

Solemn and anguish-stricken, Iva moved about her quiet country home; the house so big and still, and strangely empty, since the shadow of a coffin, feet foremost, had darkened on the sunny door-sill; then she sat down and thought, and wondered how differently the world looked to her young eyes.

Somewhat, during the religious calm of quiet that enveloped them all in those last days, Iva had been floating back from the foamy sea into which she had been whirled, into the old-time haven, where she had so peacefully risen and fallen with the tide; somehow, Austin Stewart's pale, grand face seemed very near and dear to her, although she had passed no words with him since her return home. She had caught brief glimpses of him, and she had wondered, in a vague, dim way, why he was so still and stern, and she thought the calamity she had endured was bitter enough to make her friends pity her.

The weeks went on, and the spring violets purpled over her mother's grave; and by that time, Iva had learned that Austin Stewart avoided her purposely—ever gentlemanly and courteous, but so distant and stern that many was the time her eyes had filled when his back was toward her.

And she, piqued, though secretly wounded, made no actual sign, though day by day there settled down in her heart the knowledge that she had loved him better than all the world beside; infinitely more than handsome Warren Desmond, who had attracted her girlish fancy.

With this forced truth there came an agony of despair; it was so plain that he did not care for her—even Madge Velmer acknowledged it to Iva, with her cheeks incarnadine as she said it.

Well, many a woman before Iva has borne a grave in their hearts—women who can love on, and suffer on, and then die; many a woman will—God pity them!

Then Austin Stewart sold his farm and went, no one at the Forrester homestead asked whether, although it was no secret elsewhere.

So the months wore on; the father, widowed of her who had leaned on his arm, and

from him who was evidently performing the part of spokesman.

When the bull-fighter had measured these men, and bestowed a searching glance upon the Viscount, he muttered, while his hand glided to the pistol beneath his blouse:

"There is mischief in this. Here is the fellow I spit upon last night. He feels sore yet from the insult. He would have satisfaction. These allies are hired to attack me. Let them try it. If I lay hands upon them, I shall crack their brainless heads together till they ring like bells."

"Your answer is not a suitable one, considering our stations," continued the Viscount.

"Then make what you like of it. As for stations—pah!" snapping his fingers. Independently, and then he pursued: "What do you want of me? You were waiting for me—address me—and yet you say nothing. If this is all, stand aside! I am hungry, and want my supper."

"And who said we wished to exchange words with you, bragging Spaniard?"

"Said, or unsaid, I see you hesitate in something, noble coward."

"Hear how he talks!" cried the young man to his companions.

"Then, why do you waste time with him? At him now!" was their simultaneous rejoinder; and, as they advanced upon Diego, the Viscount dashed forward with upraised arm.

Quick as thought, though with apparent ease, the bull-fighter caught the young man's arm in a vice-like grip, and placed the cold muzzle of a pistol to his temple.

In the same moment, one of the others came upon Diego's rear, struck him a blow on the head, and, while staggering under its effect, the pistol was wrenched from his grasp and discharged.

The bullet cut a hole through his sombrero.

At first, the Spaniard was surprised at this unexpected promptness and success of action; and for a brief space, they clung tenaciously to him, hammering him with their fists, yet striving, in vain, to bring him to the ground.

Then there was a growl, he shook them off, vented a loud roar, and laid about him with all the terrible force of his enormous strength.

Whiz! thug! The Viscount Berkeley found himself spinning like a top out into the center of the street, where he sprawled, full length.

The attacking party were strong, but they did not know their man.

Diego Perez kept his word.

He knocked them down, as a careful player will a set of nine-pins, and when they scrambled up, he sent them to the earth again—his ponderous fist cutting, and circling, and darting horizontally through the air like lightning streaks, and with irresistible precision. With every sweep of his brawny arm there issued from his lips a grunt.

Seizing a favorable opportunity, he grasped his assailants, one in each hand, and at a jerk, brought their heads together with a stunning crack.

Pausing to bestow a kick upon the Viscount, who had recovered from his first experience and was about to renew the attack, Diego Perez uttered a hoarse laugh, and, picking up the pistol, which lay at his feet, started off at a slow pace, glancing over his shoulder to see if they dared to follow him.

When the Viscount Berkeley could collect his scattered senses, and found breath to speak, he raved at the men who had suffered in his employ; called them fools, cowards; tried to bribe them by rich offers to pursue the bull-fighter. But they shook their now half-crazed heads, and muttering maledictions on the fate that had led them into such a plight, slunk away.

The Viscount entered the gaming-house.

In a dark, filthy, and naturally uninviting alley, which branched off from one of the more secluded thoroughfares, was situated a dingy-looking, dilapidated building termed a house. It was the home, the abode of Diego Perez; occupied by himself and an old hag, known to the neighborhood as Madge Marks.

This woman, being somewhat connected with our story, must necessarily be introduced to the reader; and, therefore, we look into the habitation, select its chief and best room, which is at most, a dirty den of foul odor.

A candle burns upon a table; beside it sat a bowl and plate, and knife and fork, as if the arrival of some one was momentarily expected; while she who baked the coarse bread, and made the muddy coffee, sits before the hearth, gazing silently into the smoldering embers.

Madge Marks was a woman of masculine build; a hag of ugly mien; disagreeable to look upon, for, about the corners of a toothless mouth, were yellow streaks, which told that she chewed snuff. Her features were wasted and wrinkled in flabby seams. The comb and brush were strange to her thick, black and wiry hair. Her eyes, small, jet-black, still sparkled and flashed like the orbs of a serpent, and the fire therein bespoke an evil nature—one much to be feared.

She feared neither man, beast, God, nor devil. She loved liquor, and was addicted to fits of drunkenness, in which none could manage her but Diego Perez.

She was sober now. She sat there, reflecting, absently, upon something, which, in all probability, was—nothing.

Presently, the door opened, and a man entered. It was Diego; and as he drew up a chair to the table, he cast aside his hat and cloak, growling, at the same time:

"Here I am, Madge Marks, and starved to madness. Where is my supper?"

"It's a sorry meal to-night, Diego," returned the hag, as she proceeded to place the rough fare before him.

"Well, well," he said, and the voice seemed to issue from the very pit of his stomach, "good or bad, I am starved, I say; and if it be not so good as what I oftentimes get outside, I shall eat it nevertheless. So give it to me," and his capacious jaws were soon hard at work.

Suddenly, Madge cried: "Ha! Diego, what's this on your sleeve—blood?"

"Yes, blood," he replied, indifferently, as he raised the beer-mug to his lips.

"And how came it there?" she continued, interrogatively.

"Why do you ask? You seek to pry into my actions always. I am tired of it. Keep your peace."

"Tell me how the blood came upon your sleeve," persisted Madge Marks.

Diego finally told her of his fight in the street; and at the conclusion of his explanation, she shook all over, as she laughed in a harsh, sepulchral way. Suddenly, however, she sobered down, and asked:

"But what were you doing at the mansion

of Lord Hallison Blair? We bargained to keep aloof from him, you know."

"Look at me!" bellowed he. "You see me? Do you read me? Am I one who would tell all his secrets at the asking?"

With this, he turned again to his repast. But Madge screamed in his ear:

"Devils on earth! am I a baby, that you should keep your secrets from me? Do you think I'll prattle them about like a brainless child? Tell me your business with the Englishman—if you had any."

"I had none," was the Spaniard's brief answer, hoping to end her curiosity.

"Now you are lying, Diego Perez. I see the falsehood in your face—read it in your words."

At this, he started up, and raised his great fist to strike her. Madge Marks flinched not, but looked him steadily in the eyes, while she sneered:

"Strike! Strike if you dare! You know me better than to do that," and there was a deep significance in the banter which caused him to pause in what he was about to do.

Grumbling in a dissatisfied way, he resumed his seat, and she resumed her importunities.

There was one person who knew Diego Perez, and did not fear him. There was one person whom the bull-fighter would not injure by insulting word or angry blow.

That person was Madge Marks; and whether it was that her glance, her speech, her action awed him, or that he feared her, from some secret, inexplicable cause, was a question which the Spaniard himself could not answer.

"Will you tell me—surly wolf!—what business appointment you had with his lordship?"

Perceiving that she would not cease to torment him, he related the bargain he had entered into with the Englishman; and concluded by saying:

"The money is all mine this time. No half for you. So let that end our talk about it."

He expected her to cry out for half the money immediately, but, to his surprise, she remained quiet for a few seconds, her eyes bent upon the bare floor. Then she looked up, and said:

"You must not do this deed, Diego."

"Not do it!" he roared, in astonishment.

"Ho! what's the matter here? Has Madge Marks joined the church? Has she reformed?"—became a cackling preacher on the vice of murder? Bah! let me alone! This is my affair—not yours. Keep your peace."

"Diego, I say you must not do this deed," repeated the hag, emphatically.

Diego Perez was, at first, astonished. Now he was bewildered. Hitherto Madge had always been with him, heart and soul, in every plot or scheme to obtain money.

Here was a chance for him, and she protested against it! What meant this sudden change in her nature? Why must he forego his promise to execute that for which Lord Hallison Blair had agreed to pay him so liberally?

"Look at me! You see me? Do you read me? Am I one to be deterred from an object wherein lies money? Here is a hundred-pound chance."

"You must not do this deed," said Madge Marks, again, her emphasis of speech more marked than before; and then she mused aloud, though it was apparent that she did not speak for Diego's benefit; "What's this I hear? Diego to kill him? How strange! It's a long way back—yet my brain is good for it—twenty-five years—no, twenty-eight. Twenty-eight years since Sal, my sister, brought me the babe. It was three years old then. Sal's dead now, I guess. I have not heard of her for nearly twenty years. I saw her once after I came back from America. Can this be him?—Lord Victor Hassan B? They called him Victor Hassan. I called him Vic, till I cut away from him. But here is Lord Victor Hassan B. Diego is about to kill him. What if it should be the child? I would save him; not that I care for him an atom, but because I hate the usurper of his rights!—I hate the man, the son of my sister, who revels in wealth that is not his. This must be prevented."

CHAPTER XV.

EXPLANATORY.

If we would keep matters in hand, it is now necessary that we turn back a period, and ascertain how it was that Victor Hassan was not killed, as his enemies supposed; how it was that he escaped from his secret grave—a thing which would seem both miraculous and impossible, when we consider how carefully he was buried in that grave, in a box, with the lid fastened down, and the heavy earth packed upon it.

It is also essential that we follow him after his delivery from death to see why he was registered on the books of the Hotel, in London, as Lord Victor Hassan B.

The young man was merely stunned, unconscious, yet in a state so nearly bordering on actual death that his would-be murderers were completely deceived.

When they left him they considered him dead; while, even as they ascended the stairs leading from the cellar, their intended victim was slowly recovering his senses.

When the heart resumed its regular beating, the blood its natural flow, and the faculties asserted their sway, it required considerable effort to recall the past, and having done this, his thoughts tended to a realization of the present.

Where was he? He reached out his hand; to the right, it came in contact with rough wood; to the left, it encountered a like substance; overhead was the same; he was lying, prostrate on his back, on hard boards.

"What can this mean?" he exclaimed; and the hollow, choked, sepulchral tones of his voice alarmed him. He noticed that his respiration was heavy, despite himself; he was cramped, though he could raise his arms above his head; no sound came to his ear; all was hushed, fearfully still.

The atmosphere grew warmer; he breathed heavier; and, as the moments passed, there came before his strained vision red and yellow flashes of light, and moving spirals of blue and green, studded with golden, flaming dots.

The time flew by. He kicked at the wooden covering above him; he hallowed; he pounded with his fists, until his knuckles were sore and bleeding, and his voice hoarse and unnatural. All in vain. After every cry, every effort to release himself from his strange, dark, horrible prison, there came the same ominous, mocking silence which maddened the brain and checked the pulsations of the heart.

Suddenly he comprehended his situation, and he trembled in ungovernable horror. He was buried alive!

He cried out afresh, kicked the stronger, pounded the more determinedly; but only

to experience a result similar to that which had attended his former exertions—fatigue, alarm, despair. Finally, he sunk back, helpless; the hot air grew hotter. Then came a ringing in the ears, as if numerous drums and cymbals, at a long distance off, were rapidly approaching in hammering, rattling, clashing discord.

He gasped for breath. His senses spun around as in a maelstrom, he was falling back to insensibility, and thence, perchance, to death.

But, at that critical moment, he caught the faint sound of a step, directly over his head. He was seized with new hope, new strength of voice and limb. He cried out with despairing energy: "Help! help! help!" and immediately heard a voice exclaim:

"Creep on us! what's that?"

"Help! help!" he shouted. "It is I. I am buried alive! Here!—underneath your feet."

There was a timid scream, and some one answered, in female accents:

"It's Mr. Victor Hassan! Where are you, sir? I'm frightened to death—"

"Kate! Kate! don't you know me? I am here!—buried right under your feet! I am suffocating—dying!"

"Land's sake! it's a ghost!"

"No, no, no; it is I—Victor Hassan. I don't know where I am, except that I am in the ground, underneath your feet. Help me out—quick! or I shall die."

Though frightened half out of her wits, when first attracted by the voice of appeal, which seemed to issue from the very bowels of the earth, the girl finally mastered her superstitious feeling, and comprehended that there actually was a live mortal beneath her, covered up by the new, damp earth.

As Victor renewed his urging, she grasped a pick, struck it into the ground with all her strength, and had the satisfaction of hearing it strike a hard substance.

There alternately using shovel and pick, the lid of the box was at length exposed, and torn open, when Victor Hassan dragged himself out into the pure air.

"Land's sake!" exclaimed his deliverer, throwing aside the implements which she held, and quickly assisting him—for he tottered weakly, under the sudden, joy-giving, life-preserving change.

"Land's sake! Mr. Victor; how did you ever get buried there?"

"Get me some water, Kate—quick!" in a husky, faint tone.

At one side of the sundry shelves containing wine, and hurriedly procuring a bottle, she handed it to him, as a substitute for the beverage he asked.

To break the neck, and drink the stimulating liquor in eager gulps, was but a moment's work, and he immediately felt invigorated by the draught.

"How in the world did you get in there, Mr. Hassan?" pointing to the grave; "and—gracious me!" you are covered with blood."

In a few words as possible, he told her how he had been holding conversation with Hallison Blair in the arbor, when he was suddenly struck a blow which rendered him insensible, and how his mind had been a blank, until he awoke to a realization of his living tomb.

Throughout his explanation, the girl listened attentively and in amazement.

"Now, Kate," he concluded, "you must say nothing about having rescued me. Be sure and keep silent. I have a great object."

"Oh, to be sure! I won't say any thing if you don't want me to."

"But, how happened it that you so providentially came here?" Victor continued.

"There! that reminds me of my errand. Mr. Blair sent me for some wine. I expect he'll be angry at my staying so long," and as she hastened to select a couple of bottles from the shelves, Victor said, inquiringly, and at hazard:

"I suppose Hallison Blair has already made himself a sort of master about the Home Mansion?"

"Yes, sir, he has. He and that doctor seem to be doing whatever they please. I don't know any thing—I suppose it's all right, though. It must be."

"But it is not, Kate; and I hope to be able to show that to you, before a great while. I think there is a piece of villainy going on."

"Laws!"

She was moving away, and he added:

"I shall remain here. Do you perform your errand, and then return to me. When you come, bring some water, so that I can wash the blood from my face."

The girl took up the candle, and he was again enveloped in thick darkness—but how different from that which had shrouded him so recently!

He walked to and fro over the level earth, stretched and exercised his arms and limbs.

It was this occurrence, this discovery of Victor Hassan, which caused the hesitation of speech in Kate, the waiting-maid, when, after a long delay, she entered the presence of Hallison Blair and the physician, bearing the wine on a salver, as was mentioned in a previous chapter.

When the Englishman dismissed her, she procured basin and water and towel, and hurried back to the cellar.

The young man washed his face and hands, cleaning them of the bloody stains; and he bathed his bruised head—for Brad had struck him with a hard weapon of some kind—a heavy, convenient piece of wood, no doubt—which left a blood-rose welt.

"What time is it, Kate?" he inquired, as he finished with the towel, and turned to her.

"Why, it's after dark!"

"And it was nearly four o'clock when I stood in the arbor," he mused aloud.

"Didn't you go home after the funeral, Mr. Hassan?"

"No, I came directly back to the mansion, in hopes of seeing your mistress, Pauline. But I could not. They said she would see no one; not even me."

"Ah! my poor, dear young mistress," she said, sadly. "She takes on dreadful about her dead father. And you, too, Mr. Hassan; she's sighing your name all the time."

"She is? She is?" he asked, eagerly.

"What does she say, Kate? Tell me."

"She wanted to see you very bad, sir; and that's why I think it's so queer that the servants wouldn't admit you."

"More villainy!" he thought, "for Hallison Blair, beyond a doubt, gave the orders to the servants as coming directly from their mistress. The day of retribution shall come!"

"But, sir," interrupted Kate, "if you didn't go back home, you must be hungry. Shall I get you any thing to eat?"

"Can you do so without betraying that I am here?"

"Oh, yes; easily enough," and she started up the stairs.

When she returned, she carried a small waiter, set with plates of nourishing food, and carrying in one hand a hat.

"I thought maybe you might need this"—handing him the latter article—"so I brought it."

A barrel served him as a table; and Kate stood beside him, holding the light, and listening to his disconnected but more minute explanation of his situation.

The food, aided by more wine, generous wine—

"For if you do but taste—"

"Will make your courage rise—"

of which there was a plenty, soon restored to him his strength, and he signified a desire to depart instantly, as something of momentous import demanded his prompt attention.

"How can I get out without being seen?" he asked.

"Wait," was the reply, "and I'll go around and open the cellar window."

When she had done this, and Victor clambered out into the fresh air of the world, he delivered a further admonition that she should say nothing whatever concerning that which had transpired; and thanking her, with all the sincerity that filled his grateful heart, for having preserved him from a horrible death, he left her, saying:

"Good-by, Kate. You have saved my life, and I shall never forget it. I hope I may be able, some day, to reward you as you deserve."

"Good-by, Mr. Hassan," and he was gone.

Victor went out to the road, where he paused a few seconds, and appeared to be resolving something in his mind. He soon arrived at an inward conclusion, for he started off, saying to himself:

"Yes, I must not delay. I am, more than ever, convinced now; and my nights would be sleepless if I neglected this. I must walk the whole distance, I suppose. But go I must!" and he quickened his pace. The road was dark and deserted, and he was not walking toward the city.

At the end of a mile, his ears were greeted by sound of wagon-wheels in his rear, and he halted, exclaiming: "How fortunate! Here comes a wagon, and perchance the driver goes somewhere near my destination."

There was a loud whip-crack, a "gee-up!" and the vehicle was nearly abreast of him.

"Hold on, friend!" cried Victor. "Stop a minute."

"Hello!" returned the man, suspiciously, though reining in his horses.

Victor advanced, and the other grasped the small end of his cowhide whip, as if he distrusted this intruder upon his solitary ride.

"Which way do you go?" continued the young man.

"A considerable distance. Why?" was the reply and question.

"Do you go anywhere near Laurel Hill burial-grounds?"

"Right past the gate—why?"

"I am glad to hear that; for I have to go there, and I hope you will take me in the wagon with you."

"That's a fact! It is a right smart tramp," demurred the countryman.

"Will you take me in?"

"Yes—I guess so."

No more was needed.

In a brief space, Victor had gained the seat, and as the horses were whipped up, lively conversation ensued, much to the stranger's satisfaction, who was glad to have found so agreeable a companion.

CHAPTER XV.

WHAT THE DREAM-BOOK SAID.

THE superintendent of Laurel Hill cemetery, a fussy, genial old bachelor, of nearly sixty years, sat before the large lamp on his center-table, in the small house on one side of the great gate, when he was startled from an absorbed perusal of a book by a loud summons at his door.

"Now, what's that, I wonder?" and as he jumped to his feet, very much like the nobleman in "Bianca or the Magic Sword," when stalking skeletons came to dine with him, we see the title of the volume he has been reading—"Book of Dreams."

"Who's there?" he demanded, timidly, as the knock was repeated, and half-fearing to open the door immediately, lest some grinning ghost, in white shroud, might leer upon him from the darkness outside.

"Let me in," was the response.

"Now," he concluded, confidently, "that's neither a specter nor a walking devil—why? Because it speaks with mortal tongue. So, now I'll let you in, whoever you are."

Having thus assured himself, he advanced to the door, turned the key, and slid back the bolts, of which there were a number; intended, no doubt, to shield him from prowling spirits in the hour "when graveyards yawn."

Victor Hassan entered; and the superintendent bowed, bent, smiled, and said:

"Ah! good-evening to you, sir. This is unexpected. People do not often come here at night. Take a seat, sir."

The young man did as requested, and while the worthy watcher of coffin-holed and tomb-raided ground had carefully relocked the door, and also seated himself, Victor addressed him with:

"Your name is Kraak, I believe?"

"Yours truly—Simon Jeremiah Ebenezer Kraak. At your service, sir," and the time-worn countenance was overspread with an open smile.

"Mr. Kraak, I have come upon important business."

"Ah! now here's my dream out. My dream! I dreamed that somebody came to see me in the night—a very dark night—and made me dig graves. Ha! I must look at my book and see what this signifies; for, here is a visitor, and a dark night, and—well, that's half, anyhow," and he took the book from the table.

"Mr. Kraak, I have no time to dally. A life depends upon immediate action."

But S. J. E. Kraak was quietly determined to know the meaning of his dream; and as he turned over the pages, he said:

"Now, young man, you may be one of those who don't believe in dreams, or that dreams go by contraries—"

"I believe neither," interrupted Victor.

"I tell you, you are wasting valuable time. Listen to me."

"But I, you see," continued the superintendent, composedly, "believe exactly what you dream must come to pass. Ah! here it is. Here's what the book says of my dream. Hear this. 'He who dreams of visitors coming in the night—if they come to meet

him at a church, or at a bedside in sickness, or at a graveyard—may depend that something strange is brewing.' Do you hear that? Something strange is brewing. Further: 'if that comer ask of the dreamer to perform a singular task, it may be believed that fearful discoveries are in store.' Do you hear that? The book is by a reliable author, and consequently—"

"Are you done with this nonsense?"

"Oh, yes. That's all. Something strange is brewing, for here is half my dream out, you see. Now, young man, what is it you have to say?"

"I am about to make a singular request."

"Oh, that means 'fearful discoveries.' What can they be? But go ahead."

"You buried in these grounds, to-day, a gentleman named Calvert Herndon?"

"Yes, yes, true; I did. He was a

which supported the coffin containing the body of Calvert Herndon.

"Don't touch it! Don't touch it!" cried Kraak, while his limbs trembled, and the hair upon his head fairly raised. "You'll arouse all the fiends, goblins, phantoms, etc., of the other world. Oh, Lord! let us go away from here."

"Silence!" rejoined Victor; and the superintendent obeyed him, while he shook as with an ague, and rattled the lantern in his hand.

Victor produced his knife, which was, very fortunately, something more than a mere penknife, and opening the large blade, proceeded with considerable effort to turn the coffin-screws.

While thus engaged, both distinctly heard a smothered groan.

Victor uttered an exclamation, and redoubled his efforts; while Kraak became whiter, more fearful, trembled till his teeth chattered.

"I tell you so. That's the voice of the devil! We're done for! Heaven receive my soul! there it is again! Oh! oh! Why was I born? Why did I ever accept the Superintendency of the Laurel Hill, with its graves, and its tombs, and its dead bodies, and the consequences of this horrible night! It's my dream. Something strange, something fearful discoveries. Lord! there it is again."

There was another groan came to their ears, hushed, faint, yet audible; seeming to dwell in the air, issue from the earth, exist upon the lips of a sepulchral invisibility.

At last the first piece was removed and turned down upon its hinges.

Though Victor Hassan expected it, though he was prepared for it, he drew back quickly, a shuddering thrill pervading his system.

Kraak stooped; the hat fell from his head; his mouth opened; his eyes distended; the astounding discovery they had made, for a moment wrought such amazement in the Superintendent, that his senses of fear were paralyzed, he gaped at what he saw—motionless, pale as a ghost; holding the lantern mechanically, for, in truth, he forgot it was in his hand.

Wrapped in white, gauzy shroud, the features immovable and of a deathly hue, Calvert Herndon gazed upon them, from his coffin, with an unearthly expression. The bloodless lips moved—but they uttered no sound; the eyes closed wearily, the head turned upon its narrow pillow of satin, there was a deep sigh, then a hushed surrounding. Kraak was completely overcome, and, letting fall the lantern, he sunk to the stone floor in a semi-conscious state.

Victor Hassan had been correct in his suspicions. It was no delusion when he thought that he detected upon Calvert Herndon's lips, as the latter lay in his coffin at the Home Mansion, a slight moisture; but it was a fact now proved. There, in the tomb of the dead, within the sacred precincts of final bodily rest, the lips were seen to move, the eyes to gaze—not vacantly nor staring, but with the light of life; the head was seen to turn; and as the atmosphere began to act upon the skin, a perceptible blush suffused the cheeks.

Fortunately, Victor recovered himself in time to snatch up the lantern, which, but for his prompt attention, would have been extinguished. Setting it upright, carefully upon the flags, he again plied his knife-blade to the screws, working with all the rapidity capable of his energy, at the same time crying to the superintendent:

"Get up, man, get up. Don't you see Mr. Herndon is alive? But he has fainted. Rouse yourself, quick, and fetch some water!"

Kraak struggled to his feet, and stood gaping, staring, bewildered, as if powerless to stir; but aroused by the young man's impatient tone, he hastened back to the house in the gate, to procure the water, scarcely conscious of what he did.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 59.)

The Avenging Angels:

OR,
THE BANDIT BROTHERS OF THE SCIOTO.

A BORDER AND INDIAN TALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SILENT HUNTER," "QUEEN OF THE WOODS," ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE DARING VENTURE.

It was early when Kenewa arose. Leaving Little Bear to sleep off his previous night's feast, and walking down to the water's side he looked out in search of any enemy that might be in sight. But none were to be seen. On every side, wherever the eye rested, nothing met the view but the mirror-like surface of the lake, the blue firmament of heaven, and the dense skirting of the woods.

Satisfied with the prospect, Kenewa returned to where the young Huron lay, this time rousing him by the use of his foot. Little Bear in an instant was on his feet, ready at a word for action in any way he was wanted.

First a frugal meal was dispatched, and then the two returned toward the water's edge, probably because of the clear light which prevailed.

Kenewa now proceeded to divest himself of all articles of clothing that distinguished him from a Shawnee, after which he washed his point off with an assiduity which showed how heartily he had entered into whatever new enterprise he had undertaken.

Then, with a grim smile, he seated himself on the sandy, pebbly shore.

Little Bear had with him the pouch of the Shawnee, from which he took the ocher, vermilion, and other colors which the redskins use in their personal decorations.

As soon as the chief's skin was quite dry the young Huron gravely commenced his task, and executed it with a precision and neatness which spoke much for his ingenuity and native wit.

He had not lived two months with the enemy without knowing every line, every curve, every device that would convert Kenewa into one of the tribe.

Soosoma was, when alive, a little older, but this the judicious hand of the boy soon remedied, and at the end of half an hour it would be difficult to have recognized a single feature belonging to Kenewa, who was transformed into a wild and savage Shawnee, without brains or heart, with nothing to guide him but his own unbridled passions.

"Is it well?" asked Kenewa.

"It is well," replied the boy; "my sister will not know her brave."

Kenewa smiled. He flattered himself that, once in her presence, there would not be much difficulty in making himself known.

No further remarks, however, were made, the warrior and lad entering the rude canoe, and paddling slowly down the lake in the direction of the Indian camp, which an hour later was reached.

The boat grated on the shore, Kenewa imitating the lounging gait and vacant manner of Soosoma, while Little Bear tottered behind him under the weight of what was left of the deer's carcass.

Few Indians were about, and those few took no notice of the arrival.

The glut of game the night before, with what remained of the white man's rum, had caused an orgie from which few had recovered.

Several, however, of the best young warriors had already gone forth to hunt again, leaving six of the picked junior braves to act as sentries—the intentions of the Bandits being suspected.

The sham Soosoma therefore easily gained his tent, slyly pointed out to him by Little Bear. This hut was apart from the others; every thing in the outcast savage being peculiar and unlike the habits of other men.

Little Bear took his place among the youths, after casting his burden at the supposed Shawnee's tent entrance.

He could see his sister in company with the two white girls; but he was too cunning to attempt opening up a hasty communication with them, knowing that his every movement was watched.

Then came evening and the evening meal, after which the usual *frente* mood came over the savages. The old men mumbled of the past; the middle-aged warriors smoked and talked of the present and the future; while the younger ones either kept watch and ward or sat without the circle of light, in conversation with some dusky fair one, who took advantage of the brief period of youth and beauty to be made love to in something of a tender fashion.

The rest of the women, young and old, as well as the children and boys, were collected round a second fire, at some distance from the warriors; and here, though none elevated their voices to an incautious or undignified pitch, might be heard the melodious voice of girls, the shrill cry of the ancient, the jolly laugh of children.

Among these the most light-hearted of all was Matata, the Prairie Rose.

She leaned against a tree, warming herself by the fire before retiring for the night, in imitation of the pale-faces.

At some little distance, also leaning against a tree, was the Little Bear, in an attitude of utter stillness.

His eye, however, roved toward his sister, and sometimes toward the wigwag of Soosoma, from which he had seen that warrior make his exit, and enter a thicket close at hand, near the lodge of the pale-face girls.

The Black Hawk of the Shawnees sat among his warriors, but every now and then he cast a look of admiration in the direction of the girl.

Not even the old men were unaffected by the sight of the female group, toward which glances of affection were every now and then cast, as the warriors checked their own discourse to listen to the low, soft voices, and the light-hearted laugh of the girls.

Matata had been telling some legend of her own tribe, to which the others listened with respectful attention; and now, concluding, she made one step to retire. As she did so she caught a warning expression in the eye of Little Bear that made her delay her movements. She distinctly heard from the thicket the low chirrup of the smallest kind of American squirrel—a sound common enough not to excite any very undue degree of attention.

It made the dusky maiden blush to the very eyes, it being the well-known signal that had often at night called her to the stolen interview beneath the green and leafy arches of the forest.

She did not, however, hurry her departure, but stood silently by the fire warming herself for some minutes, when she strolled away toward the lodge which she shared with the other prisoners.

Once, however, out of the line of light, she moved a little quicker, until she heard her name called in a tone she knew too well to be mistaken. Next minute she was in the arms, apparently, of Soosoma, the Solitary.

The lovers confined themselves to such words as were necessary. After the first moment, given to the impulses of human affection, Matata was quite silent, listening with deep interest to her warrior.

The graybeard had fallen ill—so ill as to excite fears in the breasts of all his friends. He was now better, but this had delayed the pursuit. Judge Mason was, however, still too ill to move, and having been amply supplied with necessities, had been left to the care of Martha.

The Avengers had then started on the trail, which, after great toil, they discovered. Roland Edwards and his men were well concealed, in a position which Kenewa minutely described to the Prairie Rose, and where, if he obeyed the injunctions of the Huron, he was perfectly safe from discovery.

There it was agreed they should lie until Kenewa returned from an expedition, the nature of which he did not explain.

"When the sun shall set six times on the lake, expect Kenewa the next—he will be here," commenced the warrior.

As he did so, a low but fearful sound arose from the forest, and was immediately succeeded by a high, shrill yell, that was long drawn out, until it equaled the longest and most plaintive howl of the wolf. Then came loud shouts, then utter silence.

All the warriors rose, and stood with arms ready round the central fire. Though all were really eager and expectant, not one stirred to ask a question; nor, when the young men whose voices had so startled them came from beneath the trees, bearing a heavy burden, did one syllable escape from any of the group.

Then the burden was laid down, and the corpse of Soosoma became visible.

"Ugh!" cried Theodorigo; "what dog has done this? But where found you this body, sons of the Shawnee race?"

One of the hunters modestly explained. "Then there is a false Soosoma in the camp," he said, in a low tone. "A fox of the Huron is laughing in our faces. Let him be found."

Matata, at a sign from Kenewa, had glided to her tent and laid her head on her rude pillow, so that the young warrior had no squaw to incumber him. He looked for a moment around, then above him, clutched his rifle, and with a quiet and stately step strode onward in the direction of the water.

As no motion was made to hinder him, he gave no sign of being in a hurry; and as he strode along, the women and children looked after him with something of awe,

for in the general estimation Soosoma was considered insane.

Kenewa was about half a hundred feet from the water, when to his right he saw six or seven warriors stealing along, as if to intercept his progress. The Huron hesitated no longer, but, giving his own war-whoop with surprising vigor and energy, he dashed toward the bushes that lined the shore.

The whole camp was now in an uproar, even the authority of Black Hawk failing for a moment to calm the effervescence. In a few minutes, however, his voice was heard, scouts were dispatched in every direction, and a dozen additional warriors thrown out as flankers to endeavor to intercept the daring intruder on their territory, the conqueror of their late friend—his treatment of whom, however, fairly puzzled the whole of the camp.

Kenewa knew the peril he was in, and scarcely was aware how it would be possible for him to escape from his pursuers, who, now he had sought the covert of the forest, were raging after him with all the ferocity and cunning of their race.

With a view to have a clear space on which to run, Kenewa made for the narrow strip of naked shore that lined the lake.

It was close in view, and the placid waters lay beyond, into which, rather than be taken, the Huron chief resolved to plunge.

As he reached the sand he looked to the right and left. On the latter side he saw five dark figures, just turning the corner of a dense thicket they had had to skirt, while behind he heard the crashing of the bushes, the cracking of dry wood, and every other sign of a hot and furious chase.

Before him, at some little distance in the water, was the canoe already mentioned as having brought the warrior and the lad to the camp.

With a grim smile the Huron was about to wade into the water, when he was hurled forward by a fearful leap from a huge Shawnee brave, the two falling flat on their faces in tolerably shallow water.

In an instant Kenewa was up and ready to struggle with his fierce antagonist, who, however, could scarcely crawl back to the shore; Little Bear, with a broken paddle in his hand, showing how he had been stunned.

Not a word was spoken. In an instant the two Hurons were in the frail bark, paddling with the remaining oar into the lake toward a small island at no great distance, within the deep shadow of which the canoe disappeared. When the Shawnees had picked up their discomfited warrior, nothing was to be seen.

A stillness and darkness as complete as if the silence of the forest had never been disturbed reigned on the gloomy water, the slumbering woods, and even the murky sky.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE NIGHT COMBAT.

THE rage and fury of the Shawnees at the daring feat performed by Kenewa, while tempered by their surprise at his behavior to Soosoma, the Solitary, only made them more desirous to become possessors of the person of their enemy. Scouts, runners and sentinels were dispatched on all sides to watch the lake, and at early dawn to search for any trail that might be visible on the shores of the lovely pile of water.

But when the morning did come, though eyes watched in every direction, though the shore, wherever practicable, was visited by the ablest of the trackers and trailers, not the faintest sign of the fugitive could be found. There was, however, one satisfactory incident in reference to this in the eyes of the Shawnees: knowing them to be fully prepared, it was not likely that the privacy of their camp would again be invaded.

Let, however, the enemy's audacity induce him to attempt another visit, secret and cautious sentinels were placed on all sides to watch for his return.

But as we have no wish to describe Kenewa as any thing more than a brave, cunning and undaunted Indian warrior, let us record the manner of his mysterious escape from his furious enemies.

The island toward which the Huron paddled was small, but thickly overgrown with trees and underbrush, so that in its shadow they lay quite safe, though not still, as Kenewa kept impelling his canoe by insensible degrees and with noiseless efforts in the direction of the point of the island, round which he had scarcely got when the moon, which began to rise, shone obscurely on the expanse of water which spread before them and on the dull and shapeless forms of the hills on the opposite shore.

Kenewa kept on his course direct for another island, after passing which they were quite screened from the eyes of their enemies. The paddle was now plied with greater activity, and ere three-quarters of an hour had elapsed they were at the foot of a huge dark crag or rock, rising direct from the water's edge.

The chief paddled direct for this, and just as Little Bear expected they were going to strike the precipice, a twist of the oar sent them whirling round, and in a minute more they were entering a narrow fissure in the rocks, at the end of which could be seen a dusky glare of red.

"Who comes?" said a quiet but commanding voice, while both distinctly heard the sound of a rifle being cocked.

"Kenewa," was the guttural reply; and next instant the canoe grated on the rocky shore, and the mystery of this water grotto was revealed to both the chief and his young companion.

It was one of those caverns so common in America as scarcely to excite attention, and it was now illuminated by pine torches that gave a bright and flickering light.

The whole party was there, save only Judge Mason, who had necessarily been left behind near the Pilot Rock under the charge of Martha.

The Avengers, condemned to inactivity, were sullen and moody. With every faith in Kenewa, their spirits chafed; and there were moments when all would have gladly rushed in to do battle with the overwhelming force of Shawnees and Bandits, though all were aware that this open violence would end in defeat.

Drawing the boat partly out of the water, the warrior and his young companion seated themselves by the fire, when, in deference to the impatience of his comrades and the rank of Roland Edwards, which was really that of captain in the army, he at once narrated his two nights' adventures.

All listened with intense interest.

But when Kenewa spoke of the Bandits, every eye kindled with fierce and angry passion. These demons, who were ever in their thoughts, were then to a certain extent in their power. Not one but fully understood the motive of their outlying on the

lake. The Prairie Rose had explained to the Sioux chief the pretended motive of their departure, so that their secret return boded no good to the unfortunate prisoners, whether white or red-skin.

"Thank you!" said Roland, when the Indian had finished. "This is, indeed, scouting to some purpose. What say you, my men—shall we let these incarnate fiends rest in peace one night so near us?"

"No," was the universal answer of the whole party.

"Kenewa is ready," said the chief, after two words with the Little Bear, spoken in a low tone in his native language.

No more was said, the whole party assembling without any roll-call, and mustering for the night expedition under the leadership of Captain Roland Edwards and the guidance of Kenewa.

Little Bear remained alone in the cavern. Kenewa, accompanied by Roland, entered the canoe, while the others poled out a light raft which had enabled them to reach the secret and unknown covert. Not a sound broke the stillness of the night, save the faint ripple of the water caused by the raft. The borders of the lake were closely examined, though with it they had as yet nothing to do.

Suddenly Kenewa raised his paddle to where a thread of smoke could be seen stealing along the cloudless sky, as if from a half-dying fire.

"There," he whispered.

Their course was now to the northward, up the lake; and they had not advanced more than twenty yards further when they were met by a dark and ominous cloud of robbers; and the smoke which had guided them was now seen to proceed from a large fire kindled upon the island, and which every moment became broader, redder, and more effulgent. It was quite a glaring red orb, resting on the surface of the lake itself, as it appeared, thus concealing all but the smoke from the lookers-out of the Shawnees.

"This is some Indian devilry," whispered Roland, huskily.

"No," 'tis the cunning of the pale-face thieves. They mean to trap the Shawnees. The big robbers of the Scioto have gone."

And bidding those on the raft remain stationary, Kenewa sent his bark swiftly toward the island, where it grounded on the gravelly beach with a gentle motion and a sound barely audible.

The Huron had selected a spot some little distance from the fire, and he landed, leaving his rifle in the canoe. Though he was perfectly certain of what he should discover, the warrior neglected none of the usual precautions, gliding into the forest, walking softly with his unaccustomed feet, and never speaking, not making any sound until he stood in full view of the fire.

Then he waved the others to proceed. "The rats have left their hole, and would steal the hostages they have placed in the hands of the red-skins. We must creep to the Shawnee camp."

Again the canoe and raft were in motion, and in a moment more, turning the end of the island, they came in sight of the position occupied by the enemy.

The canoe was paddled with all caution toward the camp until they reached a place which gave them a full view of the Shawnee temporary village. It was, as Kenewa knew, admirably chosen, having not only a spring of choice water—an indispensable requisite of an Indian camp—but being one of the best fishing stations on the lake.

The fire had been allowed to fall low and gave but a flickering and failing light, though, just as they came near, one of the sentries rose, cast on a pile of brush, lit his pipe, and returned to a post at no great distance from the great lodge, which was still, silent, and utterly motionless. A deathlike silence reigned over the whole scene.

The change produced by the pile of brush-wood mixed with a few pine-knots, was magical. The fire blazed fiercely, casting its light upward into the tops of the trees, with a pleasing and striking effect. The sudden glare had its advantage, for it not only illumined the camp, but none could enter within a certain radius without being seen.

The edge of the camp was composed of a fringe of thick bushes, and upon these the two men fixed their eyes. They had seen the raft making for a spot higher up the lake, where its occupants might expect a landing out of sight of the Shawnees.

Not a single sentry was visible, save the one whose double duty seemed to consist in keeping up the fire and watching the tent occupied by the prisoners.

Suddenly the bushes parted about ten feet behind the sentinel, and the hideous face of Moses Horne peered out upon the clearing. He then turned his head, and appeared to whisper something to others who were behind him.

The sentry stood with his back to a tree, smoking. His eyes were lit up, and he said, "The fire was dreamed of some happy hours, past or to come, little recking that close to him stalked death in its most hideous form."

The chain of sentries scattered in the woods caused him to be less cautious than a red-skin sentry usually is.

Moses, who now stood within the clearing, carried in his right hand his tomahawk and in his left a kind of bag.

But the ruffians were evidently willing to run the chance of a dash; for while Moses crept to the spot where the young Indian stood, the rest stole, with the caution and cunning of snakes, toward the lodge which concealed the prisoners.

Kenewa laid his hand upon Roland's arm, and said:

"Let my brother wait—every shot will be wanted."

At the same moment he took a steady aim. Moses was in the act of lifting the bag to pass it over the drowsy sentinel's head to stifle him, when the ball struck him on the wrist. The sentinel bounded into the air as if shot, and caught sight of his foe.

The four ruffians now dashed at the tent without any disguise, despite the fact that the whole camp was in an uproar; but just as the foremost was about to cut the tent with his knife, a ball from Roland Edwards' rifle crippled him.

The uproar was now fearful. For a moment the Shawnees thought themselves attacked by a powerful force, but when the noise and clamor had subsided a little, the sentry in two words explained the real state of affairs; though several warriors burst rudely into the tent occupied by the prisoners, and dragged them forth, to see that they were really safe.

Ferocious, indeed, were the glances cast at the captives by some of the party, who, furious at the treachery of the white rob-

bers, proposed to immolate the hostages at once.

All on the raft and in the canoe heard this, and an ungovernable fury took possession of every one save Kenewa, and before he could interfere a volley of bullets was heard hurdling through the trees in the direction of the warriors, followed by a volley from the Bandits, who had only retreated to the bushes.

In an instant the Shawnees had disappeared, dragging the prisoners with them into the forest.

Kenewa, who had loaded his rifle, turned reproachfully toward Steve, whose eyes were cast down upon the raft.

"The blood of the Shawnees has run like water; will they not be mad with the likes of the plain?" said the Huron, reproachfully.

"'Twas the act of a boy," replied Steve, "'twas the act of a boy." The Shawnees now know that we are here, and a pretty hot time we'll have of it."

"It was done like men!" cried Roland; "the better part of valor is not always discretion. Come, the wretches are demoralized; let us on. We have driven them to cover—and now, who loves me follow me!"

"The blood of the Shawnees is hot," said Kenewa, coldly, clutching his arm. "The first gun fired this night in the woods may put the scalping-knife to the necks of the little ones. Let them follow the horse-thieves. If they take their scalps they will talk in the morning with the friends of the pale-face girls. Powder, and lead, and blankets, and rum, may win back the lilies, and the Shawnees may then turn their backs on the wild prairies under the setting sun."

Roland sat erect and silent, after waving back his impatient followers. His blood was boiling, his heart beat wildly, and he felt that with his gallant Avengers he could have charged an army. Still, there was the light of reason within him, and he hesitated.

"But the Shawnees are angry—may they not lay their hands upon the young women?" he asked, in a half-yielding tone of voice.

"The Shawnees are skunks and thieves," said Kenewa, "but they like to hear the laugh of a young girl in their wigwams. The lilies are safe."

"He's right, cap'n," said Steve, "and what he says is judgmatial. We've acted like boys, like silly boys, but we must make up for't the best way we can. Say the word, cap'n, say the word!"

"I am in your hands, my friends," was his reply, "quite in your hands. Do with me as you please, but save the girls." The Indian and the scout made no reply, and were in the act of pushing the canoe and raft out into deeper water, when there was a sharp report and a buzz of bullets in the air, which, had they not been in motion, would probably have proved fatal to some of them.

The volley came from a line of low bushes close to the shore, to which some of the braves had crept, and into which the Avengers at once fired a whole platoon of rifles. The engagement appeared general, for at the same moment the Bandits could be heard with their heavy Western guns, succeeded by the light fusils, with which alone the policy of the traders supplies the Indians.

At this moment a report, to which that of a rifle was puny, was heard from the northern bank of the stream, directly in the rear of the Shawnees. Loud cries of rage and pain burst from the nearly naked savages, who next moment flew to cover beneath the tall large trees. But they did not reach the forest unscathed.

Dashing up the ridge that all exposed themselves unnecessarily, being bewildered at the fresh attack, and two fell before the quiet, steady aim of Kenewa the Huron, and Steve the Border Scout.

All now gazed in the direction of their ally and saw a white cloud of smoke curling slowly up in the night air from a small clump of reeds that grew about ten feet out in the water.

Next moment a tall figure rose up, and stood erect and motionless upon the bank of the prairie stream.

"I know'd it," said Steve, with his peculiar subdued laugh; "I know'd it. There's no mistaking that 'ar' old duck-gun. The Jooze has loaded it with nails and once balls, I reckon—and it considerably scared them painted devils; but he wants to come to us now, and it's my opinion we'd better go to him. There's cover on that side, and ne'er an Indian 'ull cross the water this night without our knowing."

While he was speaking the raft and canoe were impelled toward land above the opening of the stream, when all leaped ashore, and affectionately and respectfully welcomed the Judge, who led the way into the cover of a small clump of oaks, where they found Martha, cowering over the dying embers, looking much alarmed.

From that moment all signs of a struggle ended, and the lake, the forest, and the prairie relapsed into the dead silence of the night.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 55.)

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JIM CARR FROM "SCOOPER'S FLAT."

BY FLAT PAULING.

Do I know Scooper's Flat?
Yes, yer bet; why, stranger, I hail from thar;
Sh'd say I did jes' know reckless Jim Carr,
He got wiped out down yhar in a muss with a b'ar,
Leastwise I heard that.

Sh'd say Jim war grit!
Thankee, stranger, I'll take mine straight—
He c'd lick any 'thin' of his size and weight
From East or West. He hailed from Kentucky State—
Water? Jes' ter le'st bit.

Jim war allus lookin' fur muss.
Thar kom from Yorks chapmised Lee,
Staked out hi' chin 'longside of Jim and me.
A fine-lookin' feller, good as they make 'em yer see,
Nytter better nor wuss.

I liked this Yorker Lee by name,
He war th' kind y'r like at sight; and Jim, well,
He war jelous; y'as, Jim war as jelous as h—
And called Lee a sucker, a darned Yankee swell,
Which warn't right, thet same.

Things couldn't last so, of course.
Lee etnd it all quite a while. Skeeered? Thar yer out,
But he stnd it well jes' ther same; what he war about
He knowed. At last they met and then—then they
fout.

Lee got licked? Not a bit, ol' boss!
They fit and bit and gouged, yer know,
Fust Jim on top, then Lee: fust one up then he
war down.

Jim's lin' war thinned out and scattered on th' ground;
They goug'd and bit. The way them ar' chaps did
pound.

Each other! Yer bet 'twarn't slow.
Jim got sick and squealed.
A lie? Stranger, jes' think an' look over thet thar,
No man kin tell me I lie. What? Sho! you Jim
Carr?

Little Edwin knowed thet all ther time, thet ar'
Same! I own I rubbed yer rough.

Washed Overboard.

BY ROGER STARBUCK.

AMONG the passengers aboard the ship Nautilus, bound home to New York from the East Indies, was Annie Barton, a beautiful young woman of twenty, who had been to visit a much-loved brother, agent for a wealthy New York firm. He had been taken ill, and as his many duties at the East India station determined him not to desert his post, his sister had gone out to nurse him: thanks to her attentions, he was soon doing so well, that she started on her return to New York with an old uncle, a minister, who had accompanied her from that city.

The beautiful blue eyes of Annie, her unrivaled form, her bright, shining brown hair, and soft, low voice, made a strong impression on the captain of the Nautilus, a young man of twenty-eight.

In a word, he fell desperately in love with her, and so plainly told the Rev. John Barton, Annie's uncle, asking permission to pay attentions to the sweet girl.

A prior acquaintance with Captain Rogers, at the Indies, had convinced Barton of his worth. As he was temperate, industrious and intelligent, he saw no reason why the young skipper's wishes should not be complied with, his niece, of course, being willing.

Annie had admired the captain from the first. He was a handsome, dashing fellow, frank, courteous and manly, well calculated to please a sensible young woman like her.

And so, ere they had been at sea many days, Rogers was the girl's accepted lover.

Late one afternoon they stood conversing near the weather quarter rail, alternately watching the blue outline of a distant island and the masts of a sail to leeward. The sun shone brightly and the sky was of a clear blue.

Suddenly a singular, hollow humming was heard, as if some distant, unseen being were blowing a conch-shell directly over their heads.

A sort of yellowish haze passed over the sun, and a dark amber tint fell upon sky and water.

With a hasty excuse, Captain Rogers sprang from Annie's side, and his clear voice went through the ship like the report of musketry.

"Hands by the halliards! clew up royals and to' gallant sails; clew down topsails; haul down the jibs!"

The men sprang quickly to obey, for well they read that ominous vapor, gathering over sun and sky.

In ten minutes the vessel was under shortened canvas—not a moment too soon.

With a shriek and a howl the storm pounced upon her. She went down on her beam-ends, tearing through the white foaming waters with the speed of a frightened bird. A dark, red haze filled the air; the spray flew up in long columns, whirling round and round, while the scream of the blast and the thunder of the sea made continuous din. As the ship bowed along, with her bending masts so far over that her top-sail yards dipped, every timber was heard creaking a dismal complaint, while the weather shrouds, bellying far inward, told of the strength of the gale.

Suddenly the carpenter, with white lips, ran up to the captain.

"The water is making badly into the hold, sir!"

"Rig the pumps!"

The clanging of the pumps soon was heard.

But the water gained with singular rapidity.

The carpenter reported seven feet water in the hold!

"One of them bottom timbers has got loosened," he continued.

"I always thought the ship was weak thereabout, and the strain has made that timber shrink."

Captain Rogers at once gave orders to have a large yawl, which he had brought with him, got in readiness, and lowered.

"Ere the men could obey, the main top-sail was blown clear of the gasket, and flapping wildly, threatened to bring the mast down upon them, while at their work."

"Aloft there, lively, all of you!" was the command, "and stow away that sail!"

There were fifteen foremast hands aboard, who at once ran up and 'laid' out on the yard.

Just as they got there, snap went the man-top-sail-lifts, parting, the ship rolled, and the sail slatting at the moment when the yard tilted, all upon it were whirled, like so many shots, into the wild sea.

It was too rough to lower a boat for them; but some spare spars and several hencoops were thrown over.

The poor wretches drifted far to leeward, and were soon hidden in the black rack and mist of the raging tempest.

Meanwhile, the ship was settling lower every moment. The roaring and gurgling of the water could be distinctly heard as it poured into her hold.

The captain, assisted by his officers, swung the yawl over the sea, and having secured it by ropes to the ship, cut the lashings holding it, when it dropped alongside.

Annie had come on deck with her uncle, when a great sea came dashing along, lifted her from her feet, and tore her from the grasp of the old man, who had vainly endeavored to hold her!

She was carried far to leeward, her long, bright hair streaming on the water, her despairing face turned for a few moments toward the ship.

Captain Rogers heard the shriek of the unfortunate girl, and, in a moment, he would have plunged into the sea, with a rope around his waist, to secure her, or perish in the attempt, but for a loosened block, which, falling from aloft at that moment, laid him senseless.

When he recovered, he found himself aboard the yawl, with his much loved friend, Tom Bunt, the first-mate, bending over him. It was night, with moonlight: although there was a fog, the squall had passed far away to leeward, but there was no sign of the ship.

"She went down in about a quarter of an hour after we got aboard the yawl," said Bunt. "Rolled over, made one plunge, and was out of sight."

"Annie—of course—she—she is safe?" stammered the captain, hardly daring to ask the question.

"Alas! no," answered Bunt; "the last we saw of her she was clinging to a spar off in the rack! We have been heading there-away ever since, but have not found her. My opinion is she must have let go, ere long. Her uncle, yourself, the second and third-mates, with myself, are the only ones saved out of all the crew!"

The captain sobbed like a child. "Annie! Annie! Lost Annie!" he moaned, again and again.

He was soon joined by the bereaved uncle and the mates.

A consultation was held, and, as there was no water or provisions aboard, it was decided to head for land.

Early next morning they were a league from land, in which direction the fog had cleared, although still thick to leeward.

Suddenly, bursting from round a point of land, they beheld a Malay proa heading straight toward them! Ere long, with a spy-glass, they could see the crew, all armed to the teeth, clustered round the rails, gazing toward them.

thought I said that it was, and in return asked why he wished to know.

"Follow me and you will learn," was the somewhat startling proposition; for a man would be reckless indeed to obey such an injunction from every one he met on the streets of Santa Fe; but, prompted by a sudden impulse, I told him to lead off, looked carefully to my weapons, and fell in behind. Half an hour's walk brought us in front of a long, low adobe house, with shuttered windows and massive door, upon which my conductor knocked, and we were instantly admitted.

From the street we stepped directly into a large, well-lighted room, in which were assembled some fifteen or twenty men, evidently of the better class of Mexicans.

I need not enter into any detail in regard to this part of my adventure. After assuring themselves that I was really the person they were in quest of, they at once entered upon the business in hand.

They were the leaders of a political faction, and wanted a man upon whom they could depend, to go to New Orleans on a most delicate and highly important mission.

How they came to fix upon me I knew not, nor did I care. All I asked was that they should thoroughly inform me on every point of the matter, and then leave me to accept or decline as I thought proper.

They did, and after thinking upon it a few minutes, I informed them that I was at their service.

When could I start, and did I need funds for the trip?

Within an hour, and I did need money. Let it suffice for me to say that the mission was a delicate one, and they kindly informed me, there might be some danger attached thereto. Spies, hired assassins, and the like, would be on my track.

I was furnished with all necessary documents, amounting but to two little slips of paper upon which were written some cabalistic words—so they proved—and the street and numbers of the only two houses it would be needful for me to visit in the execution of my, or rather, their affairs.

In due time I found myself comfortably quartered at the St. Charles, and early on the following morning I took a cab and drove to one of the designated places.

My reception, after the bankers had read the little slip of paper, was sufficient to show me that I was not mixed up in any second-rate affair, and that they evidently regarded me with a good deal of interest, aside from

and several dark-complexioned individuals, and once, by means of a mirror, detected him in making a significant motion toward myself, while looking at one of them.

Now, this might all be imagination. So I thought; but my life on the border had given me a particularly wide-awake habit, and I never permitted anything to pass unnoticed.

Once I was importuned to bet, but declining, I was pressed no more.

As regards drinking it was different, and before I was aware of it, I felt the fumes of the brandy mounting to my brain. Late in the night we prepared to leave. Again I caught those furtive glances, this time unmistakable in their character.

A parting drink must be taken, and we stepped to the magnificent sideboard upon which the liquors stood.

At that moment a man brushed past, slightly touching me with his elbow, and instantly began a profuse apology for his unintentional rudeness.

I turned and saw that it was one of the dark-browed gentlemen, and after accepting the excuses, again faced my friend, who had already poured out the liquors, and stood, glass in hand, waiting for me to drink.

I remember now that a faint suspicion of something wrong flashed across my mind, what, I know not; but, putting it aside, and seeing my glass ready, thinking I had poured it out before the little affair of the jolting took place, I clinked glasses and swallowed the liquor at a draught.

I recollect leaving the room and standing a moment on the banquette, but, after that, save, perhaps, a faint, uncertain memory of getting, or being put, into a carriage, all was blank for, I know not how long.

A racking pain in my head, an intense soreness in my limbs, and a difficulty of breathing were the first sensations of returning consciousness.

It was pitch dark. I felt a chill air blowing upon my face, and heard a hollow murmuring, a subdued roar were perhaps a better expression, as though of water flowing rapidly or against some obstacle.

Further, I was bound hand and foot, and gagged so securely as scarcely to permit of drawing my breath.

That it was not a dream, I was only too fully aware, and then the occurrences of the last hours, whether few or many I knew not, flashed across my brain.

It is singular how rapidly and how cor-

face, which I did very quietly, the skiff was almost lost in the darkness.

In an instant I had torn the gag from my mouth, and was, for the time at least, saved. Swimming slowly, and without noise, I struck out for a vessel, the dim outlines of which I could see some distance below, and in ten minutes was clinging to her fore-chains.

Without difficulty I aroused the watchman, was hauled up on board, and immediately subjected to a series of questions that came tumbling out one over the other.

The following morning I returned to the city, sought out the gentlemen to whom I had borne the slips of paper, and informed them of the affair.

They merely looked wise, advised me not to pursue the matter, but to get back to my native (?) wilds, or some other place, just as soon as convenient.

I did so, and returned to Santa Fe, where I again met the secret coveys and rendered an account of my stewardship.

So well pleased were they, that they immediately offered me another commission, which, I need hardly say, I respectfully declined.

Beat Time's Notes.

DELAYED ANSWERS.

QUEEN VICTORIA writes: "The affairs of our ocean-girded isle are in a very prosperous condition at present, so it is not the British kingdom that troubles us, but the Vegetable kingdom. You are a gentleman that goes much, and often, on your nose; will you allow me to put a vexed political question to you? 'What will kill the smell of onions?'"

Dear Madame: Garlic is just the thing for that purpose; then, after the garlic, you might take some Swiss cheese in large-sized pills, sugar-coated, at which point you certainly have got me, and I am yours.

JIM NASTIC. You can strengthen your muscles by daily lifting. The first day lift one pound, then each day add another pound for twenty-five or thirty years, and you will be surprised to see how many tons it will come to. That is the way I began: at first I couldn't raise a pound note, nor move a dog-pound.

A MUSE. Your verses, beginning, "He promised to love me," are very promising, (promise occurs seven times), but they won't pay. "Skillet" rhymes very well with "will it," but it always looks better in the pantry. You understand what the rules of poetry are very well, and have succeeded in avoiding them very dextrously. Here are some lines I extracted with a crowbar.

"The cold, chilly winds of Augwember," "Twas night in the lonesome Noctover," "Twas in the mild Sliptunder," etc.; neat, but not gaudy.

QUANDARY writes: "I am engaged to a city belle; but, as I have only an income of \$40,000, would it be policy for me to marry?" If you desire to marry and go into the wilderness to live, that amount of money would be sufficient—or nearly so, if you are economical.

C. DITION. Observe the following rules for the day: Let the first thing you do in the morning be to wake up, which you can do easily enough by just opening your eyes. If you are in the habit of washing your face, do so. Be sure you are up in time to get your breakfast before dinner, and don't eat very long, but eat wide. A little exercise before breakfast would be good, so exercise on the flute. After you eat, lay off what you have got to do to-day—that is, lay it off till to-morrow. Straighten your accounts, but under no consideration must you straighten your circumstances. If there are any poor in your neighborhood, don't let them suffer for directions—to the poor-house. At night go and see your girl, and be sure you are home by ten; then do your ears up in papers, and go to bed.

JIM. Men are apt to regulate their value according to their neighbor's standard; just like town-lots, rise in price with the lots adjoining.

MARIA. Widows should always use Weed's Sewing Machines.

JAKE writes: "I am in my thirtieth year, and in love. Am very good-looking, even though I have one eye, and that is crossed; my nose being lost means no disparagement to my wooden leg; and my head, from which the hair is absent, is shining and not to be made light of. I have loved a young lady for two weeks, having met her twice in that time, but she actually refused to marry me when I popped the question as politely as anybody could. When I asked for the pleasure of seeing her home from church, she consented to that, but insisted that I could see her from a distance just as well, and that I could walk on the opposite side of the way. Now, as Time is said to tell all things, am I justified in marrying her?"

I don't know what the law is in your State in regard to this case. The legal questions involved seem to be very intricate. Did you ever examine your head closely to see if it was of the same material as your wooden leg? Perhaps the young lady thinks, if she married you, it would be a wooden wedding at the very start. I hate to advise in this case. Consult Webster's Spelling-Book.

LOUIS NARPLEON writes: "Since I have been throne down, and have broken my crown, the destiny of the world seems to have assumed strange shapes. Every day that passes away is another day added to the past, and France goes round at the rate of one revolution a-year; now what I want to ask is, can you tell where I can get a good washervoman?"

A good washervoman is a scarce article in the market, and in time of war is always engaged in piece-work. I couldn't recommend any in the circle of my acquaintance.

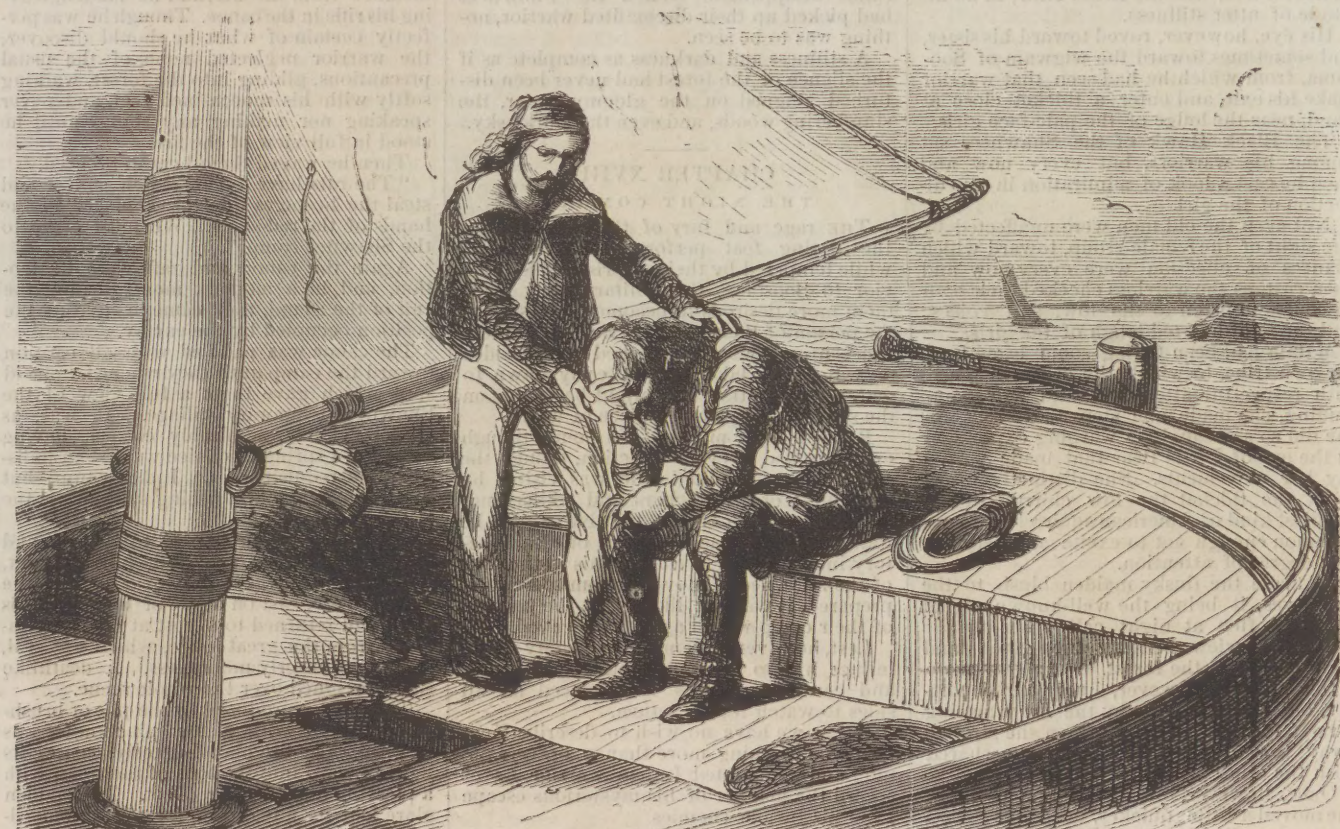
BON. According to an old Californian, the best mine is "Mine your own business."

CURE I. OSIRY. The seven wonders of the modern world: I wonder where I'll get the next dollar; I wonder if I'm not better than anybody else; I wonder how some people live; I wonder why they live; I wonder if I'm right; I wonder why I'm seldom wrong; and I wonder what's next.

FOR CORNS. Go out and saw a cord of wood; take the weekly papers; put on a clean shirt and pay your debts. Then take a sharp razor and cut off your mustache, and apply simple cold water until the corn is removed, and you will not be likely to be troubled with it. This is a receipt in full.

The best place for duns—the dungeon.

Too much praising up amounts to little less than praising down. BEAT TIME.



WASHED OVERBOARD.

They went about, and stood away from her; but she gained fast, and they believed they must soon be overtaken.

"It will go hard with us if we are captured!" said the mate.

The captain sat down, and bowed his head on his hands. He could think of nothing but Annie. He looked straight down at the deck, his eyes rolling wildly, his face convulsed with grief, while the mate, at his side, with a hand on his shoulder, vainly endeavored to rouse him.

Meanwhile the proa gained fast. Suddenly the creaking of ropes and yards was heard: a huge ship—a sloop-of-war—burst from the fog, and the proa, tacking, showed her heels.

"Cheer up, captain!" cried the mate, "here is a craft come to pick us up! We are saved!"

Still the skipper neither moved nor spoke.

The yawl was hauled alongside the sloop-of-war.

The captain heard a cry of joy.

"Annie! Annie!"

He looked up, for the first time, and there, sure enough, was the dear girl he prized more than all else in the world, looking at him over the stranger's bulwarks!

He sprang aboard: involuntarily she flew to his bosom, tears of joy coursing down the cheeks of both.

Explanations were that the sloop had picked Annie up ten minutes after she fell overboard. Clinging to the spar, she had drifted down to the war-vessel, which was right in the storm rack.

Several of the crew, who had fallen from the main-top-sail-yard, had also been picked up.

A few months later the castaways safely arrived at New York, where, in a short time, Captain Rogers and Annie were made man and wife.

Camp-Fire Yarns.

THE SECRET MISSION.

BY CAPT. "BRUN" ADAMS.

ONE night, as I was passing down the principal street in Santa Fe, listlessly idling away the time, and wishing for something to do, I was accosted by a heavily-cloaked individual, and abruptly asked if my name was not Adams.

At first I hesitated in replying, not at all fancying the fellow's manner, but on second

other feelings. What puzzled them was my being an American, and yet employed by that powerful clique, every member of which could be doomed by a single whisper into proper ears, if I chose but utter it.

That day they would not hear of business, but insisted on spending it in seeing the city and enjoying its pleasures.

But the day following their whole manner changed.

The other house was consulted, a meeting held in a room carefully guarded from outside parties, and the business discussed and pushed to a completion with a rapidity that was almost marvelous. The utmost precautions were taken to keep the affair a profound secret. I was cautioned again and again to be more than careful, and watchful, for were it to be even rumored that I was there upon such a mission, my life would be far more endangered than it ever had been among the savage tribes with whom I had so long mingled.

That was about the substance of their not altogether pleasant warning.

But, secret as we had been, there were eyes upon us, and ears to hear us, that no one ever dreamed of. In a word, there must have been a traitor in the camp, though the fact was never ascertained.

Relieved of the affair—for now I had nothing more to do with it—I determined to spend a few days in the city before returning to Santa Fe.

I found the change of life exceedingly agreeable, at least for a day or two, and with a chance acquaintance picked up at the hotel, I did the city pretty thoroughly.

The next morning, the fifth of my sojourn, I had set for my departure, and so informed my friend.

"Well, then," he exclaimed, "there is yet one place you have not seen, and you must not leave the city without visiting it."

This wonderful place proved to be the celebrated McGrath faro-rooms, and thither we went, not for the purpose of playing, but simply as lookers-on.

It was, indeed, a remarkable scene, such a one as I had never before witnessed, and I soon found myself deeply interested in observing what was going on around. During the evening I noticed that my companion appeared well known to many who were evidently habitués of the place, and this gave me some little matter for thought, as he had asserted that he was any thing but an admirer of the life—in fact, rather strongly condemned it.

I also observed that glances, quick and stealthy, were exchanged between himself

rectly the mind will sometimes act under such circumstances.

As though by intuition I saw through the whole plot.

The fancied friend, and his kind attentions, the days of pleasure-seeking, the visit to the faro-bank, the parting drink, the unintentional (?) rudeness of the dark-browed stranger, all formed one link with another until the chain was complete.

While my back was turned, in the act of receiving the man's excuses, my companion had drugged the liquor.

What a simpleton I had been not to have seen through it all! So I thought, as I lay bound and gagged in that unknown place.

Presently a door opened, a faint gleam of light stole in, and, immediately after, three men, masked, entered, and, without a word, lifted me up and bore me from the place.

I gave no sign of consciousness, hoping to hear something of their intentions.

But they preserved a strict silence, and continued on until the open air was reached. Here I was instantly placed in a carriage, which drove off at a rapid rate.

The drive was a lengthy one, and when at length the vehicle stopped, and I was lifted out, I saw that we had either left the city, or else were in some one of the many large parks or gardens that reach down to the water's edge.

There were trees and thick shrubbery on every side, save that bounded by the dark, silently-flowing river.

No time was lost here.

A low whistle brought a fourth person from somewhere. A hurried consultation ensued, and I was again lifted and borne forward, this time into a skiff that lay moored to the bank.

I saw the end now. I was to be tossed overboard and left to feed the catfish.

A hundred feet from the shore the boat suddenly stopped. I was lifted, for the third time, or partially so, and deliberately rolled over into the water.

In such a condition, and under such circumstances, a man would naturally think there was no chance for him, and so I thought.

But, there is always a chance, a hope, as long as the breath is actually in the body. I have said they rolled me over the edge of the skiff, and, in doing so, one of the turns of the cord that bound my hands caught upon a row-lock, the full weight of my body was thrown upon it, it snapped like thread, and down I went.

They must have backed off the moment I disappeared, for, when I came to the sur-